

## FOUR (4) MAIN CAUSES OF LADDER ACCIDENT INJURIES

While ladder accidents are preventable, according to the [Culture of Safety](#), the four (4) most common causes of ladder accidents are the following:

### 1. Selecting the Wrong Type of Ladder

Always consider the ladder's weight capacity. All ladders are designed to support only a certain weight. If that limit is exceeded, the ladder may break, causing the user to fall and be injured.

Ladders have a rating system that indicates the amount of weight that the ladder can safely bear. Overloading the ladder may result in the ladder breaking or failing. The following table shows both the CSA and ANSI rating grades as well as the load capacity. Load capacity includes the weight of both the worker and all materials on the ladder at any time.

LOAD CAPACITY*	DESCRIPTION	CSA CODE	ANSI CODE
200 lbs./91 kg	Household - Light Duty	Grade 3	Type III
225 lbs./102 kg	Tradesman and Farm - Medium Duty	Grade 2	Type II
250 lbs./113 kg	Construction and Industrial - Heavy Duty	Grade 1	Type I
300 lbs./136 kg	Construction and Industrial - Heavy Duty	Grade 1A	Type IA
375 lbs./170 kg	Construction and Industrial - Heavy Duty	Grade 1AA	Type IAA

\*Includes user and materials

In addition, consider the height of the job and the appropriate height of the ladder to do that job. Many ladder accidents result from using ladders too short for the job. Never place the ladder on something to extend its reach or stand on the top rung of the ladder as both are very dangerous, often causing falls and injuries.

### 2. Using Worn or Damaged Ladders



A common factor causing ladder accident injuries is using old, worn or damaged ladders. Like other tools, ladders have a limited safe and useful life. The amount of usage, the number of times up and down coupled with the weight supported may cause the ladder to wear down. Damaged ladders are very dangerous, may break, causing falls and injuries and even deaths. Therefore, always inspect the

ladder very carefully prior to use. See the **Ladder Inspection Checklist** for additional help.

### 3. Incorrect Use of Ladders

## Safety In Numbers - Ladders

Human error is the leading cause of ladder injury accidents. Never use a ladder in any other way than what the manufacturer intended it to be used for. Also, never alter the ladder such as by trying to make it longer.

In addition, when using ladders, always use three (3) points of contact with the ladders [that is, keep at least a total of three (3) hands and feet in contact with the ladder at all times while using it]

Never reach too far to either side; instead climb down, move the ladder to the side, closer to what was reached for, then climb back-up the ladder. This is much safer and will help prevent falls and injuries and even deaths.

### **4. Incorrect Placement of Ladders**

Always place the ladder on level and firm ground. Never place the ladder in front of an unguarded door, unless it is carefully and securely locked or blocked.

Practice pointer: Use a helper to support the base of the in-use ladder. If no helper is available, the consider staking the feet of the ladder to provide some additional safety support.