

Northern Kentucky University	Policy Link: Occupational Safety Policy
Issue Date: 11/02/2018	Title: LADDER SAFETY PROCEDURE
Revised Date:	

OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide the requirements for the care and safe use of portable ladders at Northern Kentucky University. This procedure is administered under the authority of University Occupational Safety Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Extension Ladder-a ladder consisting of usually two sections arranged so that they fit together or extend on a sliding mechanism almost to the full length of the two sections

Platform Stepladder-A short folding ladder with flat steps and a small flat horizontal surface

Stepladder-a ladder that has broad flat steps and two pairs of legs connected by a hinge at the top and that opens at the bottom to become freestanding



Stepladder



Platform Ladder



Extension Ladder

RULES AND PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to climb, do not substitute boxes, crates, barrels, drums, cans, furniture, plumbing fixtures, etc., for a ladder. Only authorized persons shall be allowed to use NKU owned ladders.

General Rules

- The minimum width between side rails of a straight ladder or any section of an extension ladder shall be 12 inches.
- The length of single ladders or individual sections of ladders shall not exceed 30 feet. Two-section ladders shall not exceed 48 feet in length and over two-section ladders shall not exceed 60 feet in length.
- Based on the nominal length of the ladder, each section of a multi-section ladder shall overlap the adjacent section by at least the number of feet stated in the following:

Normal length of ladder (feet)

Overlap (feet)

- Up to and including 36 3
- Over 36, up to and including 48 4
- Over 48, up to 60 5
- Extension ladders shall be equipped with positive stops which will insure the overlap specified in the above table.

- Stepladders shall not exceed 20 feet in length.
- The bottoms of the four rails of stepladders are to be supplied with insulating non-slip material for the safety of the user.
- A metal spreader or locking device of sufficient strength to securely hold the front and back section in the open position shall be a component of each stepladder. The spreader shall have all sharp points or edges covered or removed to protect the user.
- The length of a platform ladder shall not exceed 20 feet.
- The information in this policy shall be supplemented by good judgment, safety control, and caution in evaluating each situation.

Care and Maintenance

- Ladders shall be inspected frequently.
- Ladders shall not be tampered with or altered from their original design and construction.
- Ladders must be maintained and in good usable condition at all times.
- If ladders tip over, inspect ladder for side rails dents or bends, or excessively dented rungs
- check all rung-to-side-rail connections
- check hardware connections
- check rivets for shear
- Rungs should be kept free of grease, oil, and other slippery materials.
- Wooden Ladders – all wood parts shall be kept free from sharp edges and splinters; sound and free from accepted visual inspection from shake, wane, compression failures, decay, or other irregularities.
- Wooden Ladders – the joint between the steps and sides rails shall be tight.
- Ladders having defects are to be tagged and taken out of service until repaired.

Use of Ladders

- A simple rule for setting up a ladder at the proper angle is to place the base a distance from the vertical wall equal to one-fourth the working length of the ladder.
- Portable ladders are designed as a one-person working ladder based on the manufacturers load capacity.
- The ladder base section must be placed with a secure footing.
- The top of the ladder must be placed with the two rails supported, unless equipped with a single support attachment.
- When ascending or descending, the climber must face the ladder.
- Ladders must not be tied or fastened together to provide longer sections. They must be equipped with the hardware fittings necessary if the manufacturer endorses extended uses.
- Ladders shall not be placed in front of doors opening toward the ladder unless the door is blocked upon, locked, or guarded.
- Ladders shall not be placed on boxes, barrels, or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
- Ladders should not be used as a brace, guy or gin pole, gangway, or for other uses than that for which they were intended.
- No ladder should be used to gain access to a roof unless the top of the ladder extends at least 3 feet above the point of support, eave, gutter, or roofline.
- Portable ladders shall have nonconductive side rails if they are used where the employee or the ladder could contact exposed energized parts.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Safety and Emergency Management Responsibilities

Safety and Emergency Management is responsible for procedure development, review, and compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations. Safety and Emergency Management will coordinate training as needed. Safety and Emergency Management staff are authorized to halt any unsafe work practice that is not in accordance with this or any other NKU safety policy or procedure.

Chair/Director Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the chair/director to comply with applicable environmental, health and safety laws and regulations, University policies and procedures, and accepted safe work practices. Chairs/directors shall ensure that their employees receive required training prior to beginning work and annual/refresher training as needed. The chair/director is also responsible for maintaining their employee training records.

Chairs and Directors may delegate the details of program implementation to appropriate personnel within their authority. The ultimate responsibility, however, for ensuring implementation of these programs at the academic department/administrative unit level remains with the chairs/directors.

Supervisor Responsibilities

The supervisor should be a competent person, as defined by OSHA, or assign someone to be the competent person for the work group. OSHA defines a competent person as:

- A person who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or identifying working conditions which are hazardous or dangerous to employees and
- A person who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them.

The supervisor is also responsible for ensuring that each employee is properly trained and maintaining adequate training records once training has been completed.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for completing provided ladder safety training. Employees are responsible for the proper care, use, and inspection of their equipment. Employees are expected to report any unsafe conditions to a supervisor.

TRAINING

Departments shall ensure adequate training for each employee prior to performing work related to this procedure. Documentation shall be maintained for each employee. Additional information on training and documentation requirements can be found in corresponding regulations. For additional assistance contact Safety and Emergency Management.

For additional information, forms, training, and other resources visit nku.edu/safety.