

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

LADDER AND STEPSTOOL SAFETY

As we recognize Ladder Safety Month – let’s take a fresh look at how ladders are used in classrooms, offices, and throughout your facilities.



Ladders are commonly used in educational settings, yet they can pose significant risks if not used properly. Each year, staff suffer injuries due to improper use of ladders and stepstools. Observe the usage of ladders in the workplace and revisit safety training with staff, contractors, volunteers, or anyone regularly using ladders.

One of the most severe types of injuries occurs when individuals opt to use furniture instead of ladders or stepstools. Often, they lose their balance, or the furniture breaks, resulting in a fall. Unfortunately, many individuals learn this painful lesson while attempting to hang artwork on bulletin boards or ceilings, using desks, chairs, or counters as makeshift ladders. Store stepstools in convenient locations readily accessible to staff.

Evaluate how ladders are utilized on your campuses. Consider and confirm the following:

- If you supervise staff, you are required to ensure safe ladder use in the workplace.
- Create a formal inspection program.
- Remind staff to follow the observed ratings for weight capacities listed.
- Perform spot-checks on the types of ladders used in classrooms and the “community ladders” (shared by many) placed in a workroom.
- Encourage staff to report ladders in need of repair or unavailable for quick use.
- Train staff and volunteers on the basics of ladder safety.
- Require proper footwear (no sandals, high-heels, socks, or bare feet) to be worn while using ladders.
- Confirm that the right size/height of ladder for the task is used – no leaning beyond the rails and no stretching to reach.
- Place ladders on level ground and close to the object trying to reach.
- Fully open ladders and latch before climbing.
- Use three-points of contact while ascending and descending ladder (two hands and one foot).
- Use tool belts, hoist lines, or backpacks to carry items up and down to avoid carrying items in hand.
- Secure ladders when not in use or when being transported.

Please contact your ASCIP Risk Services Consultant or our team at RM_info@ascip.org for questions or training resources.

Resources for Ladder Safety Program
[American Ladder Institute - Ladder 101](#)
[CAL-OSHA e-tools - Ladders Safety](#)

Helping to keep our member’s employees safe! This Safety Spotlight brought to you by: