

Ladder Inspections and Maintenance Procedures



Ladders are essential tools in many operational tasks, but they can pose serious safety risks if not properly maintained. Regular inspections and maintenance are critical to preventing falls, equipment failure, and workplace injuries. This guide outlines the procedures for inspecting, maintaining, and managing ladders to ensure they remain safe and compliant with safety standards.

Why Ladder Inspections Matter

Ladders are often used in high-risk environments. Over time, wear and tear, environmental exposure, and improper use can compromise their integrity. Routine inspections help identify damage early, prevent accidents, and extend the life of the equipment.

Inspection Frequency

The following schedule outlines how often ladders should be inspected to ensure they remain safe and in serviceable condition:

- *Pre-Use Inspections:* Conduct a visual check before each use.
- *Monthly Inspections:* Perform a more detailed inspection and document findings.
- *Annual Inspections:* Complete a comprehensive review of all ladders in inventory, ideally by a designated safety lead or supervisor.

What to Look for During Inspections

Inspect ladders for the following issues:

- *Structural Damage:* Cracks, dents, bent rails, or broken rungs
- *Loose or Missing Parts:* Bolts, rivets, spreaders, feet, or locking mechanisms
- *Corrosion or Rust:* Especially on metal ladders or hardware
- *Non-Slip Surfaces:* Worn or missing tread on steps or feet
- *Labels and Load Ratings:* Ensure all safety labels are legible, and the ladder is rated for the intended use

Maintenance Procedures

The following practices should be followed routinely to keep ladders in optimal condition and ready for service.

- *Clean Regularly:* Remove dirt, grease, and debris from all surfaces.
- *Tighten Hardware:* Secure any loose bolts, nuts, or rivets.
- *Replace Worn Parts:* Use manufacturer-approved replacement parts only.
- *Store Properly:* Keep ladders in a dry, secure area away from extreme temperatures or corrosive materials.
- *Tag Out Unsafe Ladders:* Clearly mark and remove damaged ladders from service until repaired or replaced.

Documentation and Recordkeeping

Maintain a ladder inspection log that includes:

- Ladder ID or serial number
- Date of inspection
- Inspector's name
- Condition notes and any corrective actions taken
- Date returned to service (if applicable)

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