

Wilkins Safety Group

Weekly Update Newsletter



Welcome to this issue - Friday 25th November 2011 - of our Update

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to colleagues and friends.

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Working at height.

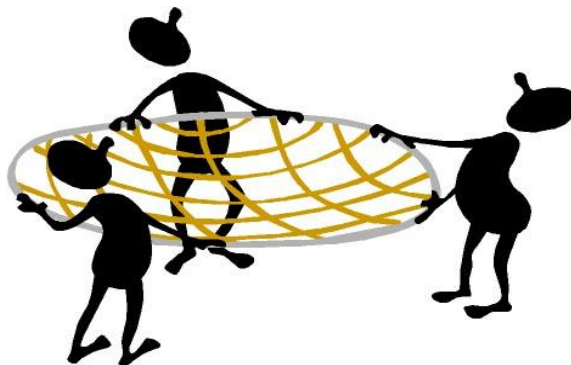
Ladder Safety regulations and working at height.

We covered this many times in our newsletters; but it seems that the business community are still not ensuring the safety of their staff, especially when there is a necessity to work at height - even a short distance of the ground can cause major damage should the employee fall. This has the effect of extra time, manpower shortage and financial implication.

So for the safety of your staff - make sure they follow the guidelines for working from ladders. If you are a client and still unsure; contact the office and we will send out the appropriate 'Risk Assessment' form that they should complete prior to every job.

The following is a brief summary of what should be looked at.

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Ladder Safety regulations

What is so dangerous about ladders? Unfortunately there have been many incidents of accidents involving ladders over recent years, so much so that legislation was brought into force to control the use and type/style of ladder used.

Some tasks within the premises may require personnel to work at height using step ladders e.g. replacing light fittings, hanging signs etc. Working at height regardless of the distance from the ground has always the potential to give rise to falls and subsequent injury.

Always check that the correct step ladder is used, a domestic step ladder is not suitable for repeated commercial use.

What you must do when required to use step ladders:-

Planning the job

Do you have to use a stepladder?

- Has a risk assessment of the task been undertaken?
- Has the right stepladder been selected for the job?
- Has the right class of stepladder been selected?

Before Use

- Always visually inspect a stepladder before it is used.
- Check for damage to the stiles (the outside uprights), steps and top platform.
- Check that the stays, hinges, chains or ropes are in good order

Setting up

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when setting up equipment.
- Check that the stepladder is locked into its correct position. Usually this will be with the legs positioned as far apart as the retaining cords/hinges allow.
- Never use stepladders in the closed position.

On the stepladder

- Always face the stepladder and use both hands when climbing up and down the steps.
- If you need to carry tools up the steps use a shoulder bag, tool belt, etc.
- Hold the stepladder with one hand while you work.
- Always keep both feet on the steps whilst working. Never have one foot on the stepladder and one on something else

Storage and records of inspection

- Stepladders should be stored in a covered, well-ventilated place where they are protected from excessive damp, heat and the weather.
- Wooden stepladders should be kept off the floor (to avoid contact with damp). Stepladders should not be stored so as to put stress on the stiles

The requirement for continual risk assessments concerning ladders goes on and all responsible employers must ensure the keep staff informed

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Training.

A necessary evil or cost effective exercise?

The Health & Safety at work Act 1974 states that all organisations must supply necessary training to all staff. The majority of training must be relevant to the individual and the job they are employed to do, however sometimes you will have to supply more generic health & safety awareness training.

This generic training should include a selection of 'tool-box' talks on a wide variety of topics including your staff policies and procedures, they should only take about 15 - 20 minutes to complete, and make them interesting.

More formal training (e.g. First Aid, Asbestos Awareness, Confined spaces and Fire awareness) can be supplied via an external agency such as [The Wilkins Safety Group](#)

Put together a training matrix for your staff and keep it up to date, ensuring you complete standard 'induction' training for staff [new and existing].

Now is the time during the 'winter quiet' period to get staff involved and up-to-date with training requirements, do ask your staff what type/topic of training they would like to have, and if it is relevant to their job and health & safety, you should consider it.

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Final reminder about last week's newsletter on 'Winter Driving', tonight is the one year anniversary of the snow fall that brought the country to a standstill.

Take care and be safe

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If you would like to discuss any of the issues highlighted in this newsletter then drop an email to Jon on jon@wilkinssafety.co.uk or call the office [01458 253682](tel:01458253682)



Your Business is Safer
Your Business is Safer in Our Hands