

MCAA Toolbox Safety Talks



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Placement of Straight Ladders

Proper ladder placement is essential to safe ladder use. Properly placed ladders are not likely to get knocked over or fall over when the work starts. Also, properly placed ladders avoid other hazards such as sources of electricity.

- Out of all the possible fall hazards in the mechanical industry, falls from ladders are the most common.
- Improperly placed ladders are the cause of many of these falls.
- Straight ladders must be placed at the proper pitch. For each four feet of height the ladder should be pitched out one foot from the vertical position. For example if you are accessing a platform that is 16 feet off the ground your ladder should be pitched out 4 feet from the vertical position (4-to-1 pitch).
- Be sure that both ladder rails have secure and level footings.
- Straight ladders should extend at least three feet above the landing.
- Ladders should be secured in place by being tied off at the top and/or braced at the bottom.
- Ladders should never be placed against windowpanes.
- Ladders that must be used near doorways, walkways, vehicle traffic areas, etc., should be barricaded so that an opening door or passing worker or vehicle cannot dislodge the ladder.
- Avoid placing ladders near sources of electricity like overhead power lines and open panel boxes. When you must access areas where electrical sources are present, de-energize and lockout the source of electricity.