



DEPARTMENT OF
**ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH AND SAFETY**

EHS BULLETIN

MAY 2022

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LADDER SAFETY

Every year, ladder-related accidents account for thousands of disabling injuries. In fact, falling from ladders is among the leading causes of workplace injuries and fatalities. To prevent such accidents, it's important to know how to inspect, use, and maintain ladders. Keep in mind that each step matters when on a ladder.

There are two kinds of portable ladders: self-supporting ones such as stepladders and non-self-supporting ladders like straight and extension ladders, which must be propped against something sturdy for safe usage.

CHECK THE FOLLOWING BEFORE STEPPING ON A LADDER:

- Rungs and side rails of the ladder must be free from cracks, bent rungs, or loose fasteners.
- Check the label to ensure legibility and to verify load ratings and construction materials.
- If a ladder is damaged, remove it from service and identify with a "Do Not Use" tag.

Once the ladder has been inspected and is ready for use, consider placement. When using a portable ladder, place it carefully on a level surface and make sure it has non-slip base pads.

SELF-SUPPORTING LADDER PLACEMENT:

- Never lean a self-supporting ladder; it should always be fully extended when in use.
- Ladder must be fully opened prior to use.
- To prevent accidents, ladders should never be placed in front of doors or around corners.

EXTENSION LADDER PLACEMENT:

- Place at least 10 feet away from overhead electrical lines.
- Extend 3 feet above the support edge (3 - 4 rungs).
- Secure top and bottom of ladder with rope or straps.
- Use the correct ladder pitch, 4-1 ratio.

After a ladder has been properly placed and it's time to ascend, remember to always maintain three points of contact with the ladder. When climbing or descending, face the ladder and hold the side rail with at least one hand. Do not attempt to carry tools in your hands as you climb.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON LADDER SAFETY, PLEASE SEE THE LINKS BELOW:

- [OSHA Ladder Safety](#)
- [EHS Ladder Safety](#)
- [EHS Ladder Inspection Checklist](#)
- [Ladder Safety Training](#)
- [Ladder Safety NIOSH App](#)

For questions or more information on ladder safety, email ehs@okstate.edu or call (405) 744-7241.

CHEMICAL STORING TIPS

It is common to find chemicals in the workplace, whether that may be a laboratory, a workshop, or even an office. In workplaces where chemical hazards are used, there is an obligation to store them safely. Improperly stored chemicals may be very dangerous and can lead to serious accidents.

Chemicals can be flammable, corrosive, toxic, explosive, carcinogenic, or otherwise dangerous. A “Chemical Storage” sign with at least 1” lettering should indicate the secure location that stores hazardous chemicals. The location should protect people from effects caused by spillage or any chemical reaction, and it should be secured from unauthorized access.

Chemicals should also be segregated by class. Many chemicals are considered incompatible and should not be stored together to avoid accidental mixing. For instance, most people would not think twice about storing bottles of bleach and vinegar together under the sink, but if they mix, they can create a toxic chlorine gas. Refer to the chemical’s safety data sheet (SDS) or label for additional storage requirements.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE CHEMICAL STORAGE:

- Minimize the amount of chemicals stored to the amount needed for any ongoing project.
- Do not overload storage shelves.
- Do not store chemicals on benchtops unless in use.
- Any extra, unneeded chemicals should be removed.
- To avoid possible explosions, do not store flammable chemicals in refrigerators or freezers unless they are designed for flammable storage
- Store chemicals out of the sunlight and away from any heat sources.
- Do not store any liquid hazardous chemicals above eye level.
- Label all chemicals with the full name of the chemical and its hazards.
- Keep a spill kit available.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON CHEMICAL STORAGE, PLEASE SEE THE LINKS BELOW:

- [Chemical Segregation](#)
- [Incompatible Chemical Management](#)
- [Flammable Liquid Storage](#)
- [Flammable Liquid Storage in Refrigerator/Freezer](#)
- [OSU Laboratory Safety Manual](#)

For questions or more information on chemical storage, email ehs@okstate.edu or call (405) 744-7241.

CURRENT EVENTS

Bloodborne Pathogen Training

2nd Tuesday of the month, 9-9:45 a.m. and 2-2:45 p.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS

Required annually for members under OSHA’s standard
Registration: email name to chemicalsafety@okstate.edu

Respiratory Protection

1st Tuesday of the month, 8:30-9:30 a.m.
FM North Building, Room 101C

Required annually for members who wear respiratory protection
Registration: email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

Fire Safety w/Hands-On Extinguisher Training

2nd Friday of the month, 9-10 a.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS

Come join us for fire safety education featuring the BullsEye laser training device
Registration: email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

Monthly Employee Training

3rd Thursday of the month, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
EHS Conference Room, 003 UHS

Topics: Hazcom; Fire Safety; Slips, Trips and Falls; Office Safety and Back Safety
Registration: email name to ohsp@okstate.edu