**Trainer’s Notes: Proper Use of Ladders**

Accidents can happen when someone falls from a ladder or uses it wrong. For this module:

• Read the information below on ladders and safe ladder practices.

• Ask your supervisor to demonstrate ladder hazards and ladder safety.

• Practice using the Four-to-One rule while your supervisor observes.

• Review the important points.

• Take the True/False quiz to check your learning

**Background**

Most ladder accidents happen when someone falls from a ladder or when the ladder falls because it is being used incorrectly

**Before Climbing a Ladder**

• Consider the type of work to be done when choosing a ladder.

• Be certain the ladder is able to carry the amount of weight that will be applied. Check ladder ratings for weight allowed.

• Industrial: Heavy-duty with a load capacity of not more than 250 pounds.

• Commercial: Medium-duty with a load capacity of not more than 225 pounds (suited for painting).

• Household: Light-duty with a load capacity of 200 pounds.

• Check the condition of the ladder using the Ladder Inspection Checklist on the next page.

• Make sure the ladder is placed on a firm, level, slip-free surface away from things like algae growth, oil droplets, potting mix, or wet grass clippings.

• Check for overhead power lines outdoors and remain clear of them.

• Check for lighting fixtures indoors and remain clear of them.

**Step Ladders**

• Be certain the spreader is locked before climbing on the ladder.

• Never stand on the top of a stepladder.

• Note: The top is not a step

**Extensions and Straight Ladders**

• Raise the extension ladder to the desired height and lock both sides.

• Never stand on the top three rungs of a straight or extension ladder.

• Don't lean a ladder against a movable object.

• Always face the ladder and hold onto the side rails with both hands, when going up or down the ladder

**Four-to-One Rule:**

For every 4 feet of rise, the base of the ladder should be 1 foot away from the object the ladder is resting against.

**Remember**

• Never use a ladder in a strong wind unless it is tied securely.

• Never use a ladder in front of a door unless the door is locked, blocked, or guarded and signs are posted.

• Inspect ladders for potential dangers before using.

• Keep your body centered between the rails of the ladder.

•Always have three points of contact while on a ladder — for example, two feet and one hand.

• Never carry tools or materials in your hand when going up or down a ladder. Use a tool belt or apron with a pocket.

• Only one person should be on a ladder at a time.

• If you must work near power lines, always use a wooden or fiberglass ladder. Never work with a metal ladder around power lines.

**Review These Important Points**

• Choose the right ladder for the intended job.

• Know the potential hazards when using a ladder.

• Know the proper placement of ladders.

**Verbal Quiz: True or False**

1. Stand on the top three rungs of a straight or extension ladder. T F

2. The Four-to-One Rule should be applied when leaning a ladder against an object. T F

3. Keep the body centered between the rails of the ladder. T F

4. It is a good idea to use a ladder in windy conditions. T F

5. A wood ladder is safe to use if it has cracks and splits, as long as it doesn’t have any missing rungs. T F

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| Answer Key |
| 1 | F |
| 2 | T |
| 3 | T |
| 4 | F |
| 5 | F |