**Safe Job Procedure for Step Ladders**

1. **Selection and inspection**

* Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.
* Use a ladder that is designed for the work task. Check the ladder’s strength/grade, type/use and CSA approval.
* Select a stepladder that is about 1 m (3 ft) shorter than the highest point you have to reach. This gives a wider, more stable base and places the shelf at a convenient working height.
* Use a fibreglass ladder when doing electrical work or when working in close proximity to electrical equipment.
* Inspect the stepladder before each use for the following;
* Damaged or worn non-slip feet.
* Loose nails, screws, bolts or nuts.
* Loose or faulty spreaders, locks and other metal parts in poor condition.
* Rotten, decayed or warped rails on wooden ladders.
* Cracks and exposed fibreglass on fibreglass ladders.
* Cracked, split, worn or broken rails, braces, steps or rungs.
* Sharp edges on rails and rungs.
* Rough or splintered surfaces.
* Corrosion, rust, oxidization and excessive wear, especially on treads.
* Twisted or distorted rails. Check by sighting along the rails.
* Missing identification labels.
* Loose or bent hinges and hinge spreaders.
* Broken stop on a hinge spreader.
* Do not use a broken or unsafe ladder, attach a warning tag, take it out-of-service and advise your supervisor.

1. **Operation**

* Get help when handling a heavy and/or long stepladder.
* Check for overhead electrical wires or other hazards before setting up the ladder.
* Clear the area around the base of the ladder of debris and other objects.
* Set up barricades and warning signs wherever necessary.
* Open the stepladder spreaders and shelf fully; lock into correct position.
* Check stability. Ensure that all ladder feet are on a firm, level and non-slippery surface.
* Place the stepladder at a right angle to the work with the back of the steps facing the work.
* Keep the stepladder close to the work.
* If your boots are muddy then clean the soles before climbing the ladder.
* Avoid climbing with wet soles. Ensure your footwear is in good condition.
* Face the stepladder when climbing up and down. Keep your body centered between the side rails. Do not work from either the top two steps of a stepladder.
* Maintain a firm/secure grip. Use both hands when climbing.
* Maintain a three point contact by keeping two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder at all times.
* Ensure all items are secure on the stepladder.

1. **Storage and maintenance**

* Clean a fibreglass ladder every three months. Spray it lightly with a clear lacquer or paste wax.
* Protect a wooden ladder with a clear sealer or wood preservative.
* Return ladders to the designated storage area after use.
* Store ladders where they are protected from the weather.
* Keep ladders clean and free of foreign materials.
* Keep wooden ladders in a well-ventilated location, away from dampness and excessive heat.