GENERAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

* Ensure that the ladder is inspected for damages, loose steps etc before work commences
* Ensure the ladder is placed on a level surface
* Do not use ladders for any purpose other than that for which it is designed.
* Ensure the locking mechanism is engage, and stays engaged before ascending or descending
* Ensure that the user does not ascend (climb) beyond the warning step. (usually red in colour)
* Ensure that there is always a team member present to secure the ladder
* Ensure the ladder is clean.
* Damaged ladders are to be removed from service.
* Never use wooden ladders.
* Do not set the ladder up on a sloped surface
* Do not balance tools, equipment or material on ladders.
* Ensure the ladder surfaces are clear and free from items before the tasks commence
* If there are no Anchor points for hooking up, then ensure that there is a buddy to secure the ladder and that the user does not step above the second (2) step/rung of the ladder.

ERGONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

* Ensure you do not overreach to reach your work area, as this will lead to a loss of balance.
* Maintain three-point contact when ascending or descending.
* Have a team member pass tools and equipment - hand-to-hand, do not lean over to fetch items
* Do not twist at the waist to reach an area behind you, reposition the ladder to enable proper access to an area.

The main hazard associated with the use of portable ladders is falls.

Falls occur for many reasons, including the following:

* The ladder is in poor condition or is improper for the task at hand.
* The ladder is poorly located and/or incorrectly positioned.
* The surface on which the ladder is located is slippery or uneven.
* Proper techniques are not observed when using the ladder.

The following guidelines, most of which evolve from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, are intended to minimize the risk of falls when using portable ladders.

**Select ladders based on anticipated use and rated load capacity.**

* Load ratings, safe working height, and other safety information must be posted on the ladder by the manufacturer. This information should be replaced if it becomes worn or defaced. The rated capacity must be sufficient to accommodate the weight of the person and everything that they are carrying.
* Portable ladders are not suitable for all situations. Depending on the task at hand, an aerial lift or other device may be the better choice. For example, a portable ladder is not a good choice when it is necessary for a person to carry heavy loads or shift their centre of gravity while on the ladder; the resting point for the top of the ladder is weak or marginally secure; three points of contact cannot be maintained (two feet and one hand); the foundation/surface upon which the ladder will be placed is uneven, slippery, angled, or will otherwise make the ladder unstable; etc.
* Remember the full height of the ladder is not available for use. For example, multi-section extension ladders must maintain a minimum overlap distance and extend a minimum of 3’ past the top of the landing point. The top step and next two rungs down on a step ladder are not intended for climbing.
* Do not use portable ladders when working near live electrical lines.
* Do not use metal ladders when working on or near electrical devices (e.g., changing light fixtures, etc.) and the ladder could become energized.

**Keep the ladder, safety feet, and auxiliary equipment in good condition always, and inspect before and after the days task.**

* + Verify that the joint between the steps and side rails is tight, all hardware and fittings are securely attached, and movable parts operate freely without binding or undue play; rivets are secure; and side rails and rungs are free of excessive denting or other signs of wear.
  + Lubricate metal bearings of locks, wheels, pulleys frequently.
  + Safety feet and other auxiliary equipment shall be kept in good condition to insure proper performance.

**Position the ladder appropriately and maintain a safe stance while on the ladder.**

* + Use a ladder of the proper height, as designed by the manufacture.
  + Inspect the area to be sure that it is free of electrical lines.
  + Do not position a ladder in an area where it can be bumped or dislodged (e.g., doorway, passage, window opening, etc.). If a ladder must be located where it can be struck or displaced, secure the area by locking doors, placing barricades, having someone stand watch, or other appropriate action.
  + Observe the proper placement angle for extension ladders. The base of the ladder should be one-foot (1’) out from the wall for every 4 feet of height. The side rails of an extension ladder that is used to access a higher landing must extend a minimum of 3’ beyond that landing.
  + Secure extension ladders with tie downs or blocking of the base. If using step ladders, ensure that the ladder is fully opened and locked in place.

4. **Properly transport, store, and maintain ladders.**

* When folding the ladders, beware of hands or fingers getting caught between the pinch points.
* Ladders should be secured while being transported in a vehicle.
* Get assistance when carrying large ladders to the work area.
* Store ladders in a sheltered area where they will not fall unexpectedly, and will not block access to hallways and fire exits.
* Ladders should be stored horizontally on racks or hooks with support points at the top, middle and bottom of the ladder to prevent sagging and warping.

**Administration**

* Ensure that the ladder inspection has been recorded in the register before use.
* Ensure that the adder is booked out of the register before use.
* Ensure that the ladder number has been reflected on the job card before use.
* Ensure that once the task has been completed, the ladder is booked back into the register.

**Approved and signed at (ENTER COMPANY NAME/WORK SITE):**

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Site Manager HSE officer/Manager

Date: Date: