*Safe Work Practices* Using Ladders

**Hazards:** Falls from ladders

**Equipment:** Ladder

**Personal protective equipment:** Slip-resistant shoes

**Training required:** On-the-job training

**Legal requirements:** Sections 13.1–13.6 of the OHS Regulation

# Safe work practices

* Select the appropriate ladder for the task.
* Inspect the rungs to ensure they are free from oil and grease and that there are no loose or broken rungs.
* Inspect wooden ladders for splinters or sharp edges.
* Inspect metal ladders for dents or bent sections.
* Make sure all support braces and bolts are present and secure.
* On extension ladders, make sure ropes are not frayed or torn.
* Position the base of the ladder on even ground using the 4:1 rule — for every 4 feet of height, place the base of the ladder one foot away from the base of the wall.
* Maintain three-point contact with the ladder at all times — two hands and one leg, or two legs and one hand.
* Don’t stand on the top two rungs of any ladder.
* Ensure that there is only one person on the ladder at a time.
* Keep your body between the ladder rails.
* When descending a ladder, face the rungs and take one rung at a time.
* Never paint over a wooden ladder. This will hide any potential cracks or defects.