



LADDER SAFETY

On average 13 people a year die at work falling from ladders and nearly 1200 suffer major injuries. More than a quarter of falls happen from ladders. Ladders should only be used for low-risk, short-duration work. The Work at Height Regulations (2005) came into force in April 2005. Employers have a duty to assess the risks, plan and supervise all workers who work at height.

When can ladders be used? Ladders can be used if after assessing the risks the use of more suitable work equipment is not justified because of the low risk and short duration. Short duration is taken to be between 15 and 30 minutes depending upon the task. Ladders can also be used for low risk work where there are features on the site that mean a ladder must be used.

The HSE aims to take 4000 'dodgy' ladders out of the workplace as part of a Ladder Exchange Scheme. HSE and Local Authority inspectors will be looking at safe ladder use this summer. The message they are sending out is: "If it is right to use a ladder, use the right ladder, use it safely. If it's not the right ladder, exchange it. Go to: www.hse.gov.uk/falls/preusechecks.htm for some clear guidance with pictures on how to check a ladder."

Does your business use ladders? If so have you carried out the required risk assessments? Make sure your business is legally compliant to avoid prosecution. For advice please don't hesitate to call us on 0845 053 3666 or email advice@hsdept.co.uk

