



# Portable Ladder Safety

Environmental Health and Safety

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## I. Purpose

This program is intended to provide guidance on the inspection, safe usage, and care of portable ladders to protect individuals from the hazards associated with their use.

## II. Scope

- A. This program applies to staff, students, and contractors who perform tasks utilizing portable ladders.
- B. For the purpose of this program, portable ladders include mobile ladder stands and platforms.
- C. This program does not apply to fixed ladders, which are covered in Northwestern's [Fall Protection](#) program.

## III. Responsibilities

- A.
  - i. Review, audit, and revise this program annually or anytime deemed necessary.
  - ii. Provide online training to applicable Northwestern departments.
  - iii. Provide additional training as needed to aid in program compliance.
  - iv. Provide guidance and technical assistance as needed.
- B.
  - i. Designate individual(s) to ensure compliance with this program.
  - ii. Ensure the care, selection, usage, and storage of portable ladders in accordance with this program and manufacturer's guidelines.
  - iii. Immediately remove damaged or defective portable ladders from service.
  - iv. Monitor employees' and students' need for additional or refresher training, based upon assigned duties, observed work practices, changes to the worksites, or changes to this program.
  - v. Coordinate with EHS to ensure all employees and students receive portable ladder safety training.
  - vi. Contact EHS for guidance and technical assistance as needed.
  - vii. Report all incidents (e.g., injuries, property damage, near misses) to EHS.
- C.
  - i. Adhere to the requirements of this program.
  - ii. Successfully complete all required training as outlined in .
  - iii. Properly select, inspect, use, handle, and store ladders in accordance with this program and manufacturer's guidelines. Refer to the [Portable Ladder Inspection Guidelines](#) and [Safe Work Practices](#).
  - iv. Immediately report damaged or defective portable ladders to supervisors.
  - v. Report all incidents (e.g., injuries, property damage, near misses), hazards, and unsafe working conditions to supervisors.
  - vi. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment correctly.
- D.

## IV. Requirements

- A. Departments, units, users, and contractors are encouraged to identify and utilize alternative solutions instead of using portable ladders, when possible (e.g., light bulb changing pole).
- B. All portable ladders used on Northwestern property must be of an approved type by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).
- C.
  - i. Portable ladders must have all labels in place and labels must be legible.
  - ii. Labels must indicate the size, type or duty rating, maximum working length, highest standing level, number and total length of sections (if applicable), model number or name, manufacturer's name and location, date of manufacturer, and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard compliance.
  - iii. Usage guidelines and other warning statements (e.g., warning, caution) from the manufacturer must also be in place on the portable ladders in specific locations depending on ladder type.
- D.
  - i. All portable ladders must be inspected when originally purchased, received, and put into service, and by the user prior to use. Refer to the Portable Ladder Inspection Guidelines (see [\[redacted\]](#)) and the manufacturer's specifications

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## V. Training

### A.

Departments and units are responsible for ensuring faculty, staff, and students are