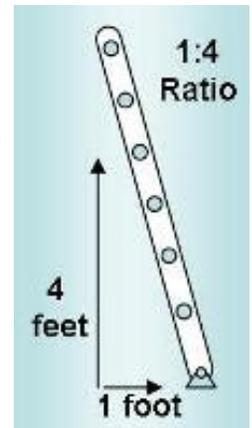


# SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

## Ladder Safety

Falls are common incidents that occur in all types of settings. A fall can occur during the simple acts of walking or climbing a ladder to change a light bulb. Conditions associated with fall incidents in the work environment frequently involve slippery, cluttered, or unstable walking/working surfaces; unprotected edges and unsafely positioned ladders. The following are some tips on the safe use of a ladder.

- ◇ Choose the appropriate ladder for the task.
- ◇ Always use a ladder in place of standing on a table, chair, or similar object.
- ◇ Always inspect the ladder prior to using it. If the ladder is damaged, it must be removed from service until repaired or discarded. Attached is a guide to help with the inspection of your ladder.
- ◇ Look overhead before placing a ladder, with special attention to power lines and other electrical hazards. Use ladders made of non-conductive material, such as fiberglass when working around electrical hazards.
- ◇ Do not use a ladder if; sleepy or ill, taking medication, or if there is bad weather.
- ◇ Do not use ladders in doorways or other high-traffic areas. If a ladder must be used near a door, make sure the door is locked or a barricade is erected to keep traffic away from the ladder.
- ◇ Only use ladders on stable and level surfaces. If the ground is soft or uneven, use boards under the legs for support. For stability, both sides of the ladder need to be against the wall or other support. The legs on a stepladder should be spread fully and locked into position. Be sure that all locks on an extension ladder are properly engaged.
- ◇ Do not place a ladder on boxes, barrels or other unstable bases to obtain additional height.
- ◇ Ladders should be placed at a 75-degree angle or 1/4 of the working length away from the support as illustrated on diagram.



- ◇ An extension or straight ladder used to access an elevated surface must extend at least 3 feet above the point of support.
- ◇ Never stand on the top two rungs of a stepladder or top four rungs of an extension ladder.
- ◇ Be aware of the ladder's load rating and of the weight it is supporting, including the weight of any tools or equipment.
- ◇ Climb and descend facing the ladder using the "3-Point Rule": At least two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand, should be in contact with the ladder when ascending or descending.
- ◇ Center your body on the ladder and keep your waist between the rails while maintaining a firm grip on the ladder. Don't overreach or lean to one side.



ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY™

SAFETY COMMITTEE ◇ 412-397-6282 ◇ [RMU.EDU/SAFETY](http://RMU.EDU/SAFETY)