

Worksite: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

Topic C584: Sectional Ladders

Introduction: Sectional ladders are a basic ladder system that consists of one base section, one or more mid sections, and one top section. Any combination of sections can be used to a maximum of 32 feet, unassembled total length. Each section added requires one foot of overlap.

Following are safety guidelines for the safe use of sectional ladders:

- Carefully and thoroughly inspect each section before each use. Inspect for cracks, gouges, sharp edges, permanent bends, loose fasteners, or other indications of impairment. Any section that is not in a safe condition must be tagged and removed from service.
- Inspect for hairline cracks (fatigue cracks) on the aluminum surfaces of side rails and rungs. Hairline cracks are as dangerous as a clean break and indicate that the ladder may fail when loaded. Do not attempt improvised repairs.
- The space behind a ladder must be free of any obstructions such as railings, bars, or other building features that might touch the underside of the ladder and prevent it from flexing. Such an obstruction can cause the ladder shoes to slip and it could interfere with the operation of the section locks. Fully engage the locking sockets or hooks when assembling the ladder before climbing.
- Choose a firm level surface on which to place the ladder feet. Non-slip bases are not intended as a substitute for care in safely placing, lashing, or holding a ladder that is being used on oily, metal, concrete, or slippery surfaces.
- When the surface is not level, use an approved ladder leveling device. Do not use bricks, stones, wood blocks, boxes, barrels, or other unattached devices. Never climb a damaged, bent, or broken ladder. Do not use a ladder in high winds.
- All ladders must be used so that the horizontal distance from the tip support to the foot of the ladder is one quarter the assembled length of the ladder. Secure the base by tying off after the assembled ladder is in place.
- Never place the ladder in front of a door that can open in the direction of the ladder.
- Do not use a ladder in the vicinity of electrical circuits where it may come in contact with them. Each section should be labeled: Caution – Do Not Use Around Electrical Equipment. Watch for and stay away from wires.
- Use wooden sectionals with rubber shoes and a linseed oil finish for electrically non-conductive sectional ladders.
- No ladder will be used where the base of the ladder is above grade unless there is a safe means of access to the base and adequate fastenings to prevent the ladder from slipping or falling.
- A co-worker must hold the base securely to prevent slipping, when a ladder is longer than 18 feet.
- Never assemble more than 32 feet of sections in one ladder. The ladder can fail after 32 feet.
- Sectional ladders must not be used by more than one person at a time, or with ladder jacks and scaffold planks. Ladders must not be used on scaffolds to give additional height.
- When ascending, working upon, or descending the ladder, the user must face the ladder and keep all body weight centered between the side rails. Maintain a firm grip. Use the three-point climbing method.
- Do not stand on, or work from the top 3 rungs of any ladder unless there are structural members that provide a firm hand hold, or the worker is protected from falling by an approved safety belt, or other equivalent means.
- Avoid pushing or pulling off to the side of the ladder. Do not attempt to walk, or shift the ladder while standing on it.
- Keep the ladder clean and free of grease, oil, mud, wet paint, and other slippery material. Keep the soles of boots clean.
- Destroy the ladder if it is broken, worn, or has been exposed to fire or chemical corrosion.
- To protect children and the general public, never leave the ladder set up and unattended.
- Never drop, or apply an impact load to any ladder or ladder section. Properly secure and support all ladder sections, while in transit. Vibration can cause fatigue cracks.
- Use rubber pads on the top section for better engagement on mullions, window side frames, window sills, spandrels and any other unusual building features. Rubber pads eliminate the need for taped or glued padding, or taping.

Conclusion: Sectional ladders are convenient, light weight, and offer great adaptability. Utilize these safety guidelines for safe ladder operations.

Employee Attendance: (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.