



Safety Note

#8

SAFE LADDER USE

Information given here is intended for use by program representatives, master food preservers, and those they train.



In excess of 30,000 people are injured each year in ladder-related accidents. The leading cause of ladder-related accidents is improper use of ladders.

Ladder Selection:

Ladders are assigned a duty rating that indicates the maximum load (combined weight of user and materials) the ladder may carry. Ladders should be selected according to the anticipated maximum load as follows: Type III light-duty ladders are duty rated for 200 pounds; Type II medium-duty ladders are duty rated for 225 pounds; and Type I heavy-duty ladders are duty rated for 250 pounds. Aluminum ladders are not suitable for work that may involve contact with electrical currents.

Ladder Precautions:

- Always inspect ladder for defects (e.g., damaged rungs, steps, braces) before using.
- Any ladder with defects must be removed from use.
- Always set ladder on a solid, level surface.
- Stepladders should be fully opened with spreaders locked.
- Extension ladders should be placed at a four-to-one ratio (i.e., ladder base should be one foot out for every four feet of height to the support point).
- Always assure all locks on extension ladders are properly engaged.
- Never place a ladder in front of a door that is not locked, blocked, or guarded.
- If an extension ladder is to be used to climb on a roof, there should be 3 feet (or 3 rungs) extending beyond the edge of the roof.
- Always mount ladders from the center and climb/descend the ladder using both hands.
- Never step on the top two rungs or top step of any ladder or platform of a stepladder.
- Never “walk” a stepladder while standing on it.
- Never place a ladder against a window pane or sash.
- Never use ladders during strong winds or storms.
- Never stand on a rung or step and face away from the ladder.

