

<b>Talk No:</b> 52	<b>Title:</b> STEP LADDERS
<p><b>Introduction:</b> Step ladders are one of the most used, and abused, pieces of equipment used during maintenance works. When abused and misused, they have enormous potential to cause accidents and injuries.</p>	
<p><b>Main points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Folding step ladders are an extremely convenient way of accessing work, which is out of reach, but familiarity can lead to carelessness.</li> <li>– Falling off a step ladder is no less serious than off an ordinary ladder so equal care is called for. (The floor is just as hard).</li> <li>– Step ladders are covered by the same regulations as ordinary ladders regarding construction and materials and this is even more critical because of the extra parts required to make them foldable.</li> <li>– Establishing a habit of checking off a mental list each time a pair of steps is used, will lead to safe working. Always check 'borrowed' steps doubly well as it is still your responsibility to ensure your own safety.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Steps must be suitable. 'Domestic' weight steps are not up to 'commercial' use.</li> <li>– Check anti-spread device (cords, clips brackets etc.). Remember, if it's defective it's illegal!</li> <li>– Check folding mechanism (hinges, pin, rivets, etc.)</li> <li>– Always spread the ladder to its fullest extent, so that it can't suddenly jerk while you are on it.</li> <li>– Ensure that all four stiles are on firm, level ground.</li> <li>– You must always have a secure handhold not less than 1.06m above the highest level reached by your feet.</li> <li>– Clearly this means you cannot stand on the top steps unless there is some other handhold e.g. an extension.</li> <li>– Place the ladder at right angles to the work so that twisting the body is not necessary.</li> <li>– Try to visualise where the centre of gravity of you, any tools or materials, and the ladder, lies so that it stays within the base area of the ladder.</li> <li>– Never over reach from ladders – get down and move them.</li> <li>– Beware of overhead obstructions</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DO IT RIGHT – IT WILL SAVE YOU PAIN LATER</b></p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b></p>	