

**WAC 296-32-22560 Ladders.** (1) The employer must ensure that no employee nor any material or equipment must be supported or permitted to be supported on any portion of a ladder unless it is first determined, by inspections and checks conducted by a competent person that such ladder is free of defects, in good condition and secured in place.

(2) The spacing between steps or rungs permanently installed on poles and towers must be no more than eighteen inches (thirty-six inches on any one side). This requirement also applies to fixed ladders on towers, when towers are so equipped. Spacing between steps must be uniform above the initial unstepped section, except where working, standing, or access steps are required. Fixed ladder rungs and step rungs for poles and towers must have a minimum diameter of 5/8 inch. Fixed ladder rungs must have a minimum clear width of twelve inches. Steps for poles and towers must have a minimum clear width of 4 1/2 inches. The spacing between detachable steps may not exceed thirty inches on any one side, and these steps must be secured when in use.

(3) Portable wood ladders intended for general use must not be painted, but may be coated with a translucent nonconductive coating. Portable wood ladders must not be longitudinally reinforced with metal.

(4) Portable wood and fiberglass ladders that are not being carried on vehicles and are not in active use must be stored where they will not be exposed to the elements and where there is good ventilation.

(5) Aluminum or conductive ladders may not be used on a work site that contains potential electrical hazards.

(6) Rolling ladders.

(a) Rolling ladders used in telecommunication facilities must have a width between the side rails, inside to inside, of at least twelve inches.

(b) Except in working spaces that are not a means of egress, the ladders must have a minimum inside width, between the side rails, of at least eight inches.

(7) Climbing ladders or stairways on scaffolds used for access and egress must be affixed or built into the scaffold by proper design and engineering, and must be so located that their use will not disturb the stability of the scaffold. The rungs of the climbing device must be equally spaced, but may not be less than twelve inches nominal nor more than sixteen inches nominal apart. Horizontal end rungs used for platform support may also be utilized as a climbing device if such rungs meet the spacing requirement of this subsection, and if clearance between the rung and the edge of the platform is sufficient to afford a secure handhold. If a portable ladder is affixed to the scaffold, it must be securely attached and must have rungs meeting the spacing requirements of this subsection. Clearance must be provided in the back of the ladder of not less than six inches from center of rung to the nearest scaffold structural member.

(8) When using ladder hooks: Employees must secure themselves to the ladder and aerial strand by:

(a) A lineman's belt and strap; or

(b) Ladder safety equipment if provided.

(9) Portable ladders, when in use, must be:

(a) Equipped with safety shoes; and

(b) Equipped with properly adjusted locking levelers when working on uneven ground.

(10) Ladders must be inspected by a competent person prior to each use. Ladders which have developed defects must be withdrawn from service for repair or destruction and tagged or marked as "dangerous do not use."

(11) Persons on ladders. Ladders must not be moved, shifted or adjusted while anyone is on the ladder. Secure the ladder at the top and bottom when working from it.

**Note:** See chapter 296-876 WAC for additional safety requirements on ladders.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 20-20-109, § 296-32-22560, filed 10/6/20, effective 11/6/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, and chapter 49.17 RCW. WSR 17-20-069, § 296-32-22560, filed 10/2/17, effective 1/1/18.]