



Automate Safety Toolbox Talks. Save Time.

Topic: Ladder Safety with Ice and Snow

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Team / Department: _____

Talk Conducted By: _____

When winter comes knocking at your door, it brings a whole new set of challenges—especially when it comes to working at heights with ladders. As you walk out into the crisp air, have you ever thought about the hidden dangers that ice and snow can present? Let's dig into some ladder safety measures that are particularly important in icy conditions.

Understanding the Risks

Ice and snow can create hazardous situations when using ladders. The slippery surfaces affect your stability and balance, making an already tricky task much more perilous.

Key Risks:

- **Slippery Rungs:** Icy steps can lead to falls.
- **Toppling Over:** Snow accumulation can change the ladder's angle.
- **Visibility Issues:** Snow can obstruct your view and add confusion.

Ladder Selection

Choosing the right ladder is a fundamental step in ensuring safety. In winter conditions, certain features become critical.

Features to Look For:

- **Anti-slip Feet:** Look for ladders with rubberized feet to provide better grip on slippery surfaces.
- **Lightweight Materials:** Aluminum ladders are easier to maneuver, but they can be slippery, so consider non-slip options.

- **Adjustable Legs:** Some ladders allow for uneven surfaces, essential when snow is involved.

Pre-Work Assessment

Before climbing up, take a moment to assess the conditions around your work area. This simple step can make all the difference.

What to Check:

- **Ground Conditions:** Is there ice or snow on the ground where the ladder will stand?
- **Weather Forecast:** Is more snow expected during the day?
- **Obstructed Paths:** Are there any overhanging branches or power lines?

Proper Ladder Set-Up

Setting up a ladder correctly is vital for safety, especially in adverse conditions. Follow these guidelines to ensure stability.

Steps to Follow:

- **Secure the Base:** Always place the ladder on a flat, stable surface. If you're dealing with snow, clear a space for the ladder legs.
- **Angle Guidelines:** Use the 4-to-1 rule. For every four feet of ladder height, ensure the base is one foot away from the wall.
- **Use Stabilizers:** If possible, position stabilizers on the ladder for added balance.

Safe Climbing Practices

Once the ladder is set, it's time to focus on climbing safely. Remember to keep your movements smooth and deliberate.

Climbing Tips:

- **Use Three Points of Contact:** Always have two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder.
- **Do Not Lean:** Keep your body centered. Leaning leads to loss of balance and falls.
- **Watch Your Head:** Be cautious. If it's snowing, wear a hard hat and check for anything falling on you while working.

Examples of Common Scenarios

Sometimes, practical examples make things clearer. Here are a couple of scenarios that illustrate potential risks and correct practices.

Example 1:

If a worker sets a ladder on a snowy patch without removing the snow, the ladder could sink or slide, leading to a fall. Always clear the base area before setting the ladder.

Example 2:

A worker who leans too far to the right while trying to reach a roof edge risks tipping over. Keeping your body centered helps avoid this critical error.

Emergency Preparedness

No one wants an accident, but it's crucial to be prepared in case something does go wrong.

Be Ready:

- **First Aid Kit:** Always have one nearby, including supplies for fall-related injuries.
- **Emergency Contacts:** Make sure that everyone knows who to call in case of an injury.
- **Plan B:** If conditions worsen, do not hesitate to stop work. If it's too risky, it's better to postpone tasks than to rush.

By understanding the risks and implementing proper ladder safety measures during icy and snowy conditions, everyone can contribute to maintaining a safer workspace. Be aware, adjust your practices, and always prioritize safety above all else.

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