

Working at Height

1. Introduction

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 applies to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. They place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person who controls the work of others (e.g. facilities managers or building owners who may contract others to work at height) to the extent they control the work.

The Regulations require the company to ensure:

- All work at height is properly planned and organised;
- All work at height takes account of weather conditions that could endanger health and safety;
- Those involved in work at height are trained and competent;
- The place where work at height is done is safe;
- Equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected;
- The risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled; and
- The risks from falling objects are properly controlled.

2. Scope

- The working at height policy applies to all permanent employees of the Lakethorne Group with a contract of employment. Employees under a fixed term contract of six months or more may be subject to this policy.
- Line managers are responsible for the implementation of the policy for all their new staff, including agency staff.

3. Aims and objectives

When planning for work at height, Lakethorne first consider where the work will be done, if the job allows then it will be any existing structure that allows safe access and provides a safe working place. Where it is not possible to work safely from the existing structure, then a formal working at height risk assessment will be conducted. When selecting a safe system of work at heights, all the risks will be considered before one method is selected.

A third of all reported fall-from-height incidents involve ladders and stepladders, on average this accounts for 14 deaths and 1200 major injuries to workers each year. Many of these injuries are caused by inappropriate or incorrect use of the equipment.

Lakethorne will:

- Ensure that no work is done at height if it is safe and reasonably practicable to do it other than at height;
- Ensure that the work is properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out in as safe a way as is reasonably practicable;
- Plan for emergencies and rescue;

Employees should only use ladders or stepladders:

- Where they will not be struck by vehicles, by protecting them with suitable barriers or cones;
- Where they will not be pushed over by other hazards such as doors or windows, if necessary, secure doors (not fire exits) and windows where possible. If this is impractical, have a person standing guard at a doorway, or inform workers not to open windows until they are told to do so;
- Where pedestrians are prevented from walking under them or near them, by using barriers, cones or, as a last resort, a person standing guard at the base;
- If you have taken account of the risk assessment carried out by the Health and Safety Manager

Remember - only use a ladder or stepladder:

- On firm ground or spread the load (e.g. use a board);
- On level ground
- On clean, solid surfaces (paving slabs, floors etc). These need to be clean (no oil, moss or leaf litter) and free of loose material (sand, packaging materials etc) so the feet can grip. Remember that shiny floor surfaces can be very slippery

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Remember also:

- Ensure that you always have three points of contact, i.e. two legs and a hand.
- You should never have to lean sideways when up a ladder.
- Heavy or bulky loads should not be carried up or down ladders
- **DO NOT** attempt to repair ladders.

Make sure:

- You check the condition of the ladder
- The work only requires one hand to be used;
- The work can be reached without stretching;
- The ladder can be fixed to prevent slipping; and
- A good handhold is available.
- The ladder is secure - ladders are only safe when they rest on a firm, level surface.
- Do not place them on packing.

4. Policy review

The Managing Director undertakes to periodically review this policy in light of current and planned future activities, on an annual basis, and more frequently when legislation or industry best practice dictates.

Signed: 
Richard Bent
Managing Director

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Next review date: January 2020

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