



GBCA SAFETY TOOLBOX TALK

PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY: WEATHER-RELATED HAZARDS

Weather and the elements—wind, rain, snow, and extreme temperatures—can turn portable ladders into potential hazards. This toolbox talk details some potential effects of weather on portable ladders. **Remember to properly store your portable ladders, such as keeping them dry when not in use.**

SHORT-TERM SAFETY ISSUES

Wet weather conditions can turn ladders into slipping hazards.

- Rain, snow, or sleet, can make ladder rungs slippery. If the ground is wet, the base of the ladder could slip.
- Even when working indoors, check your shoes. Try to keep the soles dry and clear the treads of mud or snow/ice.
- Portable ladders left in freezing conditions can become icy and/or wet.

Moisture can cause warnings and instructional stickers to tear off.

- Ladders with damaged or illegible labels should be removed from service until new labels are attached.

Wind gusts can make your ladder unintentionally move or fall over.

- Avoid using a portable ladder in gusting, high-speed winds. Strong winds can push over a ladder, even with you standing on it!
- Tie off the top of your extension ladder so that any unexpected gust of wind does not cause it to move or fall over.

LONG-TERM SAFETY ISSUES

Water causes ladders to deteriorate.

- Metal parts like spreaders, rivets, and other fasteners can corrode over time if constantly exposed to moisture. Weakened parts may bend or break.

Wooden ladders left in water (e.g. puddles) or left out in rain/snow can become waterlogged.

- Waterlogging can weaken a wooden ladder's joints (see previous point) and cause the wood to deteriorate more quickly.
- A waterlogged ladder can conduct electricity. Avoid using a waterlogged ladder while working on or near energized electrical lines or equipment.

Constant exposure to direct sunlight can wear out some ladders more quickly.

- Ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun will slowly deteriorate the fibers in wood and fiberglass ladders over extremely long periods of time.
- UV light can also cause warning and instructional stickers to fade and become illegible. Ladders with damaged or illegible labels should be removed from service until new labels are attached.



GBCA SAFETY TOOLBOX TALK ■ SIGN-IN SHEET

TOOLBOX TALK TOPIC:

EMPLOYER: _____ PROJECT: _____

PRESENTER: _____ DATE: _____

NAME (PRINTED)	SIGNATURE	COMPANY (IF APPLICABLE)
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NOTES AND QUESTIONS:

<p>PRESENTER SIGNATURE (TO VERIFY ABOVE INFO):</p>
