

SAFETY ALERT



Fall from a Ladder

Incident Details

A team of installers were installing a false wall between two connecting rooms inside a campus building. This involved attaching a medium density fiberboard (MDF) to a brick wall, using a hand drill and screws.



Our staff member placed one foot on the first rung of a step ladder and the other foot onto the second rung and commenced drilling through the MDF into the brick wall, when the drill bit sunk suddenly into the cavity of the brick wall. This caused a change in the staff member's centre of gravity, causing him to fall to the ground, resulting in a dislocated shoulder.

Investigation Results

On investigation, the rubber anti-slip end caps on the base of the step ladder were blocked by accumulated debris, reducing its grip on the floor surface.

The sudden change to the staff member's centre of gravity caused the staff member to lose their balance.

Key Messages

- Always assess your Ladder using a pre-start checklist on the Health and Safety [website](#) prior to commencing working on ladders.
- Ensure that the ladder selected is fit for purpose for example, if working at heights, a platform ladder will provide the necessary fall protection hereby reducing the likelihood of a fall occurring. If working on a lower height e.g., less than 600mm off the ground, a safety step stool will prevent overreaching. This stool is also more stable than a step ladder.
- Ensure the completed risk assessment details which ladder is required for the task.

Who do you call with questions?

If you have any queries, please contact Health and Safety on 9266 4900 or email healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au.

Date of Issue

17/10/2022

Injured party's foot was on the second rung (575 mm from the ground)

