



SUMMER 2018

## from experience

environmental, health & safety edition

### Stepping Up Fall Protection for Fixed Ladder Systems

In late 2016, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) released final rules updating OSHA 29 CFR 1910.23 (Ladders), 29 CFR 1910.28 (Fall Protection), and 29 CFR 1910.29 (Walking-Working Surfaces). For fixed ladders that involve an elevation of 24 feet or more, the new rules regarding fall protection are:

- Existing ladders installed before 11/19/18, must be equipped with a personal fall arrest system, ladder safety system, cage, or well. 1910.28(b)(9)(i)(A).
- New ladders installed on or after 11/19/18 must be equipped with a personal fall arrest system or ladder safety system. 1910.28(b)(9)(i)(B).
- By 11/19/36, all such ladders must be equipped with a personal fall arrest system or a ladder safety system. 1910.28(b)(9)(i)(D).

The following definitions apply:

- Fixed ladder: A ladder permanently attached to a structure, building, or equipment.
- Ladder Safety System: A system designed to eliminate or reduce the possibility of falling from a ladder. A ladder safety system usually consists of a carrier, safety sleeve, lanyard, connectors, and body harness. Cages and wells are not ladder safety systems.

What do the new rules mean for your facility? After November 18, 2018, for facilities planning to install new fixed ladders exceeding a 24-foot climb, or repair a previously installed ladder, cage, or well, the updated requirements for fall protection will apply, such as:

- Each ladder safety system allows the employee to climb up and down using both hands and does not require continuously holding, pushing, or pull any part of the system while climbing.
- Connection between the carrier/lifeline and the point of attachment to the body harness or belt does not exceed 9 inches.
- Mountings for rigid (rail) carriers are attached at each end of the carrier, with intermediate mountings spaced, as necessary, along the entire length of the carrier so the system has the strength to stop employee falls.
- Mountings for flexible carriers (cable) are attached at each end of the carrier and cable guides for flexible carriers are installed between 25 and 40 feet apart along the entire length of the carrier.
- Ladder safety systems and their support systems are capable of withstanding, without failure, a drop test consisting of an 18-inch drop of a 500-pound weight.
- Body belts, harnesses, and other components must meet the requirements of 1910.140 (Personal Fall Protection Systems).

Note that this is just a small sub-section of the OSHA requirements for fixed ladders and fall protection. Visit [OSHA.gov](http://OSHA.gov) to learn more. For existing fixed ladders with elevations of 20 feet and greater, the rules require the installation of a cage system be in place. For these existing systems, the cage system may remain, but as of November 2036 those systems must be retrofitted to include a ladder safety system or personal fall arrest system.

#### experience in brief

The EPA's mandate restricting hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerants continues to be challenged within the Federal court system. In late June, it was announced that the case will be sent to the Supreme Court for consideration. While phase-out plans for Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) remains on course, this continuing litigation means that the phasing out of HFC refrigerants will not be as immediate as expected and may be delayed indefinitely. Stay tuned for more information.

#### continuing education

Hixson associates regularly participate in continuing professional education events across the country. To learn more about the events listed below, e-mail Hixson at: [info@hixson-inc.com](mailto:info@hixson-inc.com)

*Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation, "Combustible Dust Hazards: Recognition, Evaluation and Control Recommendations"*  
June 14, 2018

*Manufacturers' Education Council's "28th Annual Environmental Permitting in Ohio" Conference*  
July 25-26, 2018

*Upcoming in 2019: "49th Annual Food & Beverage Environmental Conference"*  
New Orleans, LA  
March 31 - April 3, 2019  
Register at:  
<http://environ-council.affi.org/index.asp?sid=65>

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