

Advisory Committee Background and Overview
General Industry Safety Orders, Sections 3276, 3278, 3279, 3280
Ladders

Background:

This proposed rulemaking is the result of a Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Division) Form 9, Request for Change in Existing Safety Order. The Division provided the following background information regarding the proposed rulemaking:

“The Division proposes a consolidation of GISO pertaining to the design, use and care of portable ladders. Currently, Sections 3278, 3289 and 3280 apply to portable ladders of different material composition. There are significant differences in the safety requirements referenced in each section. Section 3276 relates to the use of all ladders but is not complete. Consequently, safety requirements found in metal ladders cannot be applied to wood, fiberglass ladders or vice versa. This has created a great deal of confusion when attempting to apply safety standards to portable ladders whose only difference is the material from which they are made.”

From a safety standpoint, the hazards associated with the use of portable ladders, whether they be wood, metal or fiberglass are essentially the same and therefore merit consolidation into one single section. In addition to consolidating existing portable ladder regulation, the Division has added selection, care and use provisions from existing safety orders and ANSI standards that will provide additional safety for workers and guidance to the regulated public. The standards relating to the use of fixed ladders in section 3276 was moved to section 3278.”

Ladder accidents continue to be a major source of workplace injuries and merit easy to read and substantive regulations for prevention. The research of portable ladder accidents indicates that the accidents relate to the use of ladders more than the design of ladders. Since all safety standards proposed have existed in Title 8 or ANSI for many years, the Division does not anticipate additional costs to the regulated public.”

Should you wish to compare the proposal with the existing text of the GISO ladder standards, the sections may be viewed on the internet at: <http://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/sb7g1a4.html>