EXCAVATIONS TRADE
CALL FOR LOCATES

PROJECT BACKGROUND

During a hospital expansion project, underground utility work was required to provide additional power and sewer systems.

CALL FOR LOCATES: ISSUES

The General Contractor (GC) wanted to start excavation in an area where a franchise internet supplier was currently working.

- Since the franchise vendor had called for locates in the area, and these were located by a third-party locate firm, the GC felt calling the 811 locate number was a duplication of work already done and unnecessary.

The GC started excavation and soon hit and cut the underground franchise utility cabling.

- The third-party locate firm did not clearly identify the location of the franchise utility lines.
- The third-party locate firm had attempted to indicate only the utilities they were asked to identify.

The hospital was contacted because the GC interrupted their internet service by cutting the underground cabling.

- The hospital administration asked the GC if they had called for locates in the area using the 811 number.
- The GC could only state this was done by the franchise utility, and the franchise utility locator failed to identify all lines correctly.

The hospital administration's legal department informed the GC they were liable for any and all damages assessed by the franchise utility to the hospital because the GC did not call the locate number before excavation, **which is required by statute**.

HOW TO AVOID THESE ISSUES

Never assume other work in the area provides relief from due diligence by calling for locates and potholing for utilities.

- Even if this means duplicating work already conducted by others, it is required by statute to be completed before any excavation.
- Another locate activity might have discovered or clarified the locates identified, or any locates omitted.

Suppose a locate firm has a relationship with a specific vendor.

- They may only locate non-vendor utilities because the vendor requesting their services may already know the location of their lines.

Do not assume work done for others will work for you.

- In this case, the contractor placed themselves in a vulnerable position by not calling in an 811 locate request.
- Not calling in an 811 locate request leaves contractors open to liability, possibly subject to claims, and becoming involved in a court case.

Actual Loss: **Approximately $100 K for not making one phone call**

References for Calling: Contact https://call811.com or dial 811, the national Call-Before-You-Dig phone number.

- Remember, by statute, calling the 811 locate request number before excavation is required.
- Before digging, anyone who plans to dig should call 811 or go to their state 811 center's website to request the approximate location of buried utilities be marked with paint or flags so that you do not unintentionally dig into an underground utility line.

Residential Utility Locate

Commercial Utility Locate Marking

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have we called for locates, or are we vulnerable by relying on work conducted by others?
2. What can go wrong with this project?
3. Is there anything we need to communicate with the GC through the Request For Information process?

Quality Safety Times wants to present your industry professional, real-life work stories and scenarios. Your stories are learning tools to improve the industry to help reduce rework and improper installation. Consider sharing your stories via our website. www.qualitysafetytimes.com, at ***Tell Your Story***

EXCAVATIONS TRADE
JOB-MADE WOODEN LADDER
SAFETY TOOLBOX TALK

OVERVIEW

Job-made wooden ladders are temporary ladders used when needed by the Mechanical trade in the construction industry.

- Improper workplace use of all ladder types accounts for 25% of non-fatal falls and 33% of fatalities on our job sites.

LEARN AND APPLY THE FOLLOWING

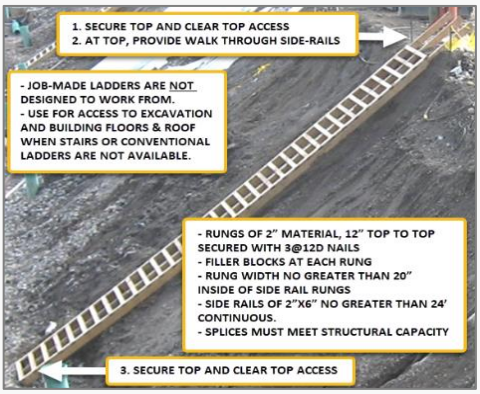
Know the risks, practice ladder safety precautions, and set up procedures to avoid potential accidents.

- Job-made wooden ladders provide excavation workers access to relocate to and from trenching.
- Job-made wooden ladders are **temporary** and **only** used until a specific phase of excavation work is completed or until stairways or fixed ladders are installed.

Constructing and Setting Up an On-Site Wooden Ladder. Refer to Figure 1.

1. Job-made wooden ladders protect workers from energized electrical equipment.
2. Job-made ladders **must** simultaneously support at least four times the anticipated load weight of all potential ladder workers and their equipment.
3. The width of a single-rung wooden ladder is determined between the rails, inside to inside. The width must be at least 16 inches and no more than 20 inches.
4. The distance between rungs is center to center, no more than 12 inches apart. A filler block that supports the rung **must** be installed between each rung.
5. Rails **must** extend between 36 and 42 inches above the top access landing to provide a handhold for mounting and dismounting. Filler blocks **must** be eliminated above the top access landing level.
6. Trenches 4+ feet deep, ladders **must** be spaced 25' horizontally apart so workers reach them quickly to escape safely.
7. Smooth the surface of the wood surface to reduce splinters, injuries, or snagging of clothing.
8. Place your ladder on a stable and level surface. Level the surface if necessary.
9. **Secure** the wooden ladder firmly so it does not move at the top and bottom. Secure the middle as needed.

Figure 1 Job-Made Wooden Ladder



Meeting Date:
Supervisor:
Employee Name:

Safe Use of Job-Made Wooden Ladders.

1. **Never** use a job-made wooden ladder as a type of work platform.
2. Inspect job-made wooden ladders periodically for defects before and after any occurrence that could affect their safe use.
   a) Wooden ladder defects include structural damage, broken or split side rails (front and back), missing cleats, and missing steps.
   b) Inspect each wooden ladder for oil, grease, or other slippery substances.
3. **Always** maintain an area free of obstacles and debris around the top and bottom access.
4. Wear protective footwear that offers, at a minimum, prevention from the risk of injury from uneven walking surfaces, impacts, punctures, or electrical hazards on the job site.
5. **Always** face the ladder when ascending and descending and maintain a 3-point contact (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand).
6. **Always** wear a tool belt or use a handline when transporting tools or equipment up or down a job-made wooden ladder.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some key takeaways for safely using a job-made wooden ladder?
2. Does this site require a specific type of job-made wooden ladder?
3. Are there General Contractor or Building Owner specific rules that apply to job-made wooden ladder use above the OSHA Ladder standards?