

# Use of safe portable ladders by VEU installers



Information for VEU program participants

**3 May 2019**



VEECs are not eligible for registration if a program activity is not undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004 (Vic) or OHS regulations.



Accredited persons must ensure that installers are equipped with, and trained in the use of, safe portable ladders.



Installers must not use unsafe portable ladders or undertake activities in an unsafe manner.

## Overview

### Safe use and care of portable ladders

Ladders are commonly used in a number of Victorian Energy Upgrade (VEU) program activities. Accredited persons have a duty under OHS legislation to provide installers with information and training in the safe use and care of portable ladders as a fall from a ladder can result in serious or fatal injuries even if only working at a relatively low height.

Under OHS legislation, if a task involves the possibility of a fall, the employer must ensure that any risk associated with a fall is assessed and eliminated. If the task requires the use of a ladder, you must ensure that the ladder is safe to use, is appropriate for the task undertaken and that it is set up in the correct manner.

To ensure VEECs are eligible under the program, accredited persons must ensure that:

- their installers, and sub-contractors who perform installations on their behalf, are equipped with, and trained in the use of, safe portable ladders when undertaking relevant activities
- ladders used are compliant with AS/NZS 1892.5 (Portable ladders: Selection, safe use and care).



You should refer to the WorkSafe Victoria guidance note 'Prevention of falls in construction: Selection and safe use of portable ladders' for information about how to determine when to use a ladder, what to look for when purchasing or selecting a ladder, and how to safely use and maintain a ladder (see <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>).

## **Why we updated the requirements**

Through our audit program, we have become aware that installers performing residential lighting upgrades have not been provided with safe portable ladders by their employer and have requested the use of consumer ladders to perform installations at heights. The use of untested consumer ladders or the accessing of lighting equipment at heights without a ladder (e.g. outdoor lights from balconies) may be in breach of OHS legislation and could result in serious or fatal injuries.

## **Our response**

We have updated the Obligations and Program Guide for Accredited Persons to reflect that accredited persons must ensure that installers are equipped with safe portable ladders when performing residential lighting upgrades (and other relevant program activities).

## **Who is impacted**

Stakeholders affected by this include:

- accredited persons participating (or intending to participate) in residential lighting activities (activity 21)
- accredited persons engaged in any activity where installers are required to use a ladder.

## **Key dates**

This update is effective from 3 May 2019.

## **Where to get help**

If you have any questions about matters set out in this document, please contact VEU Support on (03) 9032 1310 or [veu@esc.vic.gov.au](mailto:veu@esc.vic.gov.au).