



TAKE FIVE for Safety- Ladder Safety Update

Frank Craner

January 13, 2026



Brief Event Description

On January 8, 2026, at approximately 11:00 am while entering Steam Manhole #59 (east entry) to prepare for a complex Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) in support of a condensate leak repair...

- the top steel access rung of the manhole structurally failed and separated from the concrete, falling to the bottom of the manhole.
- The worker was standing on the rung at the time of the failure and fell approximately 7–8 feet, landing on his feet at the bottom of the manhole.
- The worker exited the manhole without assistance and was transported to the OMC for medical evaluation.



ES&H NEWSFLASH

Actionable. Engaging.

January 12, 2026

All Yellow-Tagged Fixed Vertical Ladders Temporarily Controlled as Red Until Further Notice

Ginger Blanda, ESH&Q Manager & Megan Magrum, SHSD Manager

On January 8, 2026, while entering Steam Manhole #59 to prepare for a complex Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) in support of a condensate leak repair, the top steel access rung of the manhole structurally failed and separated from the concrete, resulting in the worker falling to the bottom of the manhole.

The worker was standing on the rung at the time of the failure and fell approximately 7-8 feet, landing on his feet at the bottom of the manhole. This ladder was yellow-tagged and had undergone structural degradation since its last inspection. Fortunately, the individual sustained only a minor injury; however, the potential severity of this incident underscores the importance of our controls and ongoing vigilance. For that reason, we are taking immediate action while we investigate further.

Therefore, effective immediately:

ALL YELLOW-TAGGED FIXED VERTICAL LADDERS will be **ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED AS RED (OUT OF SERVICE) UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**. Per the *Fixed Ladders, Design, Inspection, and Use* Subject Area, "if no other means of access to the area is feasible, then the use of a ladder classified as 'Out of Service' requires enhanced work planning (such as a fall protection plan) and the approval of both the Fixed Ladders SME and Department Chair/Division Manager (or their designees)."

Facilities & Operations maintains the vertical ladder inventory and will coordinate inspections of all ladders with their respective owners (note: F&O is responsible for most but not all vertical ladders). Inspections will be documented for each ladder using the "Fixed Vertical Ladders – Periodic Inspection Checklist" from Maximo. The ladder database will be updated prior to lifting this control for yellow-tagged ladders.

Key Safety Expectations: Once the Control is Lifted: Remember to review the Ladder Information Sheet (LIS) prior to using a fixed vertical ladder when the ladder is tagged yellow. The LIS contains photos of the ladder at the time of the inspection, as well as associated hazards and mitigations for use.

The LIS can be found in Maximo by looking up the unique Ladder asset number affixed to each ladder. If you do not have access to Maximo, contact the Facility Operations Center for assistance.



Remember the Safe Conduct of Research Principle, Evaluate hazards for every task, every time. Make sure to do the following before climbing a fixed vertical ladder:

- Review the documented hazards and required mitigations before climbing.
- Use the photographs provided on the LIS to compare current ladder conditions and confirm there have been no visible changes that could compromise structural integrity.
- If conditions appear different than documented, pause work, notify your supervisor to request a re-evaluation.
- Remember: *If you see something, say something*.

Per the Subject Area, the following definitions apply for compliant and non-compliant vertically fixed ladders.

- **Green:** Ladder was inspected and found in compliance with standards.
- **Yellow:** Ladder was inspected and some noncompliance's with standards were noted, however, with the use of additional provisions, the ladder can be used safely.
- **Red:** Ladder was inspected and one or more noncompliance's with standards were noted and the ladder has been taken out of service. An "Out of Service" warning tag is attached to the ladder.
- **Blue:** Ladder has not been evaluated for compliances and cannot be used.

As with any task, make sure you are trained, qualified, and authorized before use.

Per the Subject Area, the following definitions apply for compliant and non-compliant vertically fixed ladders.

- Green: Ladder was inspected and found in compliance with standards.
- Yellow: Ladder was inspected and some noncompliance's with standards were noted, however, with the use of additional provisions, the ladder can be used safely.
- Red: Ladder was inspected and one or more noncompliance's with standards were noted and the ladder has been taken out of service. An "Out of Service" warning tag is attached to the ladder.
- Blue: Ladder has not been evaluated for compliances and cannot be used.

Example of Yellow Ladder



Current Requirement

- **All YELLOW-TAGGED FIXED VERTICAL LADDERS will be ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED AS RED (OUT OF SERVICE) UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**
- Per the *Fixed Ladders, Design, Inspection, and Use* Subject Area, “if no other means of access to the area is feasible, then the use of a ladder classified as ‘Out of Service’ requires enhanced work planning (such as a fall protection plan) and the approval of both the Fixed Ladders SME and Department Chair/Division Manager (or their designees).”

Current Status

Today:

- Ladder Safety SME performed inspections of ladders in Cryogenic Compressor skids
- Use Work Permit/Fall Protection Plan for use of any other Yellow or Red Ladders.
- Inspector training to be provided this afternoon to some ESH staff and 1 member of ITSD

Tomorrow:

- Inspector Training of C-AD staff will take place at 1:30 by invitation.
- Continue to use Work Permit/Fall Protection Plan for use of any other Yellow or Red Ladders.

Going Forward

- Use Work Permit/Fall Protection Plan for use of any Yellow or Red Ladders.
- Is it Red or Yellow?
 - As of now, the only “Yellow” ladders in C-AD that are yellow are in 1005H (New-Yellow)
 - Ladder Information Systems will be updated to show “new” inspection date.
 - Yellow Ladders (Old-Yellow) with inspection dates prior to 1/13/25 default to Red.
 - Yellow ladders that are re-inspected revert back to yellow (New-Yellow) if inspection passes.