

# TESTIGOS CRISTIANOS DE JEHOVÁ

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KHA:KHB March 26, 2018

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Use of Folding Step Ladders at Kingdom Halls

Dear Brothers:

In recent years great efforts have been made to improve the maintenance of Kingdom Halls. To that end, inspections are being made and preventive maintenance courses are being conducted all around the country. Most reports received at the branch emphasize the fine cooperation of the bodies of elders and the publishers in general in support of this program, all very commendable.

On the other hand, those reports indicate that some Kingdom Halls lack adequate ladders for cleaning and maintenance work, or that the ladders are not in good condition. The booklet *Working Together Safely—Standards for Theocratic Construction and Maintenance* (DC-82) states the following: “As the ‘Grand Creator,’ Jehovah God considers life sacred and highly valuable. (Eccl. 12:1; Ps. 36:9) As his servants, it is a reflection of our spirituality when we have the same viewpoint. (Eph. 5:1) Therefore, we do not take unnecessary risks or disregard established safety standards. (Deut. 22:8; Eccl. 10:9) [...]When a dangerous situation is not avoided, serious injury or death can occur. Words cannot express the physical and emotional impact this can have—it is devastating. All of us, therefore, have a moral and spiritual responsibility to work safely!”

In view of the importance of this matter, we would like to share with you some instructions and recommendations related to the use of step ladders for work done in Kingdom Halls.

Household stepladders, purchased without the guarantee of meeting safety standards in their manufacture, should not be used. Another aspect to consider: In most Kingdom Halls we recommend using two sizes, one up to two meters in height (for use in routine cleaning), another to about three meters (for maintenance or special cleaning jobs). In the case of Halls that involve work at greater heights, a ladder for work up to 4.5 meters high may be used.

In the near future a purchase agreement will be available in the “Agreement with Suppliers” section of the JW website, including the three types of ladders recommended for use. Ladders with the recommended features can be purchased. Although it is not obligatory to use the supplier indicated in the agreement, we recommend doing so. This will assure that the ladders meet required safety criteria and will also help maintain the discount prices. As for the quantity of ladders needed, this will depend on the characteristics of the Kingdom Hall and how the work is organized.

If in a certain Kingdom Hall there are tasks that cannot be performed with the types of ladders recommended, please consult the Local Design and Construction Department (LDC) to receive advice or, if necessary, authorization to acquire a different type of ladder or other means to handle a specific need.

Please ask the maintenance overseer, or the maintenance committee, to check the ladders used at the Kingdom Hall to make sure they meet requirements. Any ladder in bad condition should be discarded immediately.

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Page 2

Finally, it is important to remember that Kingdom Hall maintenance may entail certain risks to health and property, due to the variations in the ability of the members of one congregation and another. Those overseeing the work should be able to identify the dangers involved and implement a method of doing the work that, taking into account the age and experience of each worker, permits those caring for the assigned tasks to work with safety. When planning cleaning and maintenance work, please follow the instructions given in the letter of May 13, 2016, regarding “Safely Maintaining Our Places of Worship” and the following forms: *Congregation Job Hazard Analysis* (DC-85) and *Congregation Job Hazard Analysis Instructions* (DC-85i).

Thank you very much, dear brothers, for your efforts in behalf of the safety and wellbeing of our brothers. Please receive warm greetings and an expression of Christian love.

Your brothers,

*Testigos Cristianos de Jehová*

c. c. Circuit overseers