

# DMM Safety Alert

## Ladder Safety

On April 20, 2020, a processing manager was injured while attempting to re-secure a baghouse hopper cover in the mine's processing plant. While using a 6-foot stepladder to reach the cover, the manager lost his balance and the ladder overturned, causing him to fall approximately 4 feet onto the ladder and concrete floor. The manager didn't notice any obvious injuries immediately after the fall, but, before leaving for the day, he noticed blood in his urine. EMS was called and he was transported to a hospital, where he was examined and admitted for observation. The manager was discharged from the hospital the following day, after determining he had not suffered any injuries that required medical treatment.

The Virginia Division of Mineral Mining (DMM) recommends the following to help prevent a similar type accident from occurring:

- Prior to starting work, assess potential safety and health hazards and determine the appropriate work procedures and personal equipment needed to do the job safely.
- For jobs like this, a scissors lift may be more appropriate for providing stable, safe access to the hopper door.
- When a ladder is appropriate, be sure to select the proper ladder type and height for the job. The ladder used in this incident (as shown in the photo) was too short to provide safe, stable access.
- A ladder should be set up so that a worker does not have to move their center of gravity outside of the side rails of the ladder.
- It is also good practice when working on a ladder, to have another person hold the ladder for stability.
- Remember, fall protection is to be used where there is a danger of falling and is recommended when working from a ladder. 4 VAC 25-40-1740
- Use this incident to provide and review ladder safety training for workers who use ladders during the course of their work.

