

## Three-point contact rule



Injuries resulting from falls when exiting and entering the cab of a truck, climbing onto or off of trailers or truck bodies and using ladders can result in very serious injury and cost employers tens of thousands of dollars. The most common body parts injured in these types of accidents include, but are not limited to, knees, ankles, shoulders and backs.

The main issue is that accidents caused from improper mounting and dismounting of equipment are easily preventable—if employees follow the “three-point contact rule.”

The three-point contact rule requires three of four points of contact to be maintained with the vehicle, trailer, equipment or ladder at all times. This means: two hands and one foot or both feet and one hand. This will allow the employee to maintain stability and support which reduces the likelihood of slipping and falling.

***As with any safety program, the employer’s role includes:***

- Maintaining and inspecting equipment on a regular basis.
- Providing steps to truck cabs and trailers with non-slip surfaces.
- Ensuring hand grip bars/rails are in place and secure.
- Providing training to all employees in the three-point contact rule.
- Enforcing use.
- Retraining as necessary.

***The employee’s role includes:***

- Keeping steps, ladders and standing surfaces free of snow, mud and debris.
- Reporting damaged equipment immediately.
- **Not** using tires or wheel hubs as a step surface.
- **Not** using doorframes or edges as a handhold.
- Wearing proper footwear.
- Not climbing up or down with something in hand.
- Climbing and descending slowly and using extra caution when working in inclement weather.
- Exiting and entering facing the equipment or truck.
- Keeping a firm grip on rails or handles.
- **Not** jumping to avoid losing balance due to uneven, wet or icy surfaces.
- Mounting and dismounting only when the equipment is stopped.

Following the three-point contact rule may help the employer reduce the number of preventable accidents.

*The information contained in this service bulletin was obtained from reliable sources. However, United Fire Group accepts no legal responsibility for the correctness or completeness of this information.*