

Warning Over Telescopic Ladder Safety

DIY enthusiasts, tradesmen and gardeners are being warned to check telescopic ladders thoroughly and use them with care after investigations led to over 32,000 dangerous sets being subject to recall or withdrawal from sale

Enquiries by Trading Standards East Midlands into the safety of telescopic ladders revealed major concerns and led to government-funded testing involving four local authorities within the East Midlands Region.

Telescopic ladders have become increasingly popular in recent years because they fold away and can be easily stored. However, their operation can require multiple locking mechanisms and just one faulty part or damage can lead to the ladder collapsing.

In total, 13 different telescopic ladder types have been tested by the four authorities. All failed to meet relevant parts of British Standard EN 131 – the Standards for ladder design, safety and structural requirements.

Almost all of the ladders were easily damaged during testing, suggesting many similar products available to consumers are not robust enough to cope with normal wear and tear.

In the worst case, a ladder snapped in half beneath the test load – despite claiming to comply with the Standard.

Importing companies have taken action to withdraw from sale or recall over 32,000 ladders as a result of investigations following the Trading Standards East Midlands checks.

Councillor Toby Neal, Portfolio Holder for Nottingham City Council's Community Protection Trading Standards Service, said:

"At this time of year many people will be heading into the garden or doing some outside DIY, perhaps using a ladder they bought a while ago for the first time. We would urge anyone using a telescopic ladder to take even more care than usual and make sure they check each locking mechanism thoroughly before climbing the rungs. If any damage is apparent, however small, we recommend avoiding use.

Anyone with any doubts should not use the ladder and contact the supplier where it was bought. We are pleased to announce that following the Trading Standards East Midlands survey the UK Ladder Association has published new [guidance for telescopic ladder users](#)

highlighting additional safety precautions and an updated version of the telescopic ladder British Standard is currently being discussed throughout Europe."

Eleven of the 13 ladders tested were confirmed as being manufactured in China and most were bought online.

The importer of the ladder that snapped in testing was prosecuted and fined a total of £10,000 and ordered to pay £2,000 costs in November 2016 after admitting selling an unsafe product and which falsely claimed to meet the relevant Standard.

If you have purchased a product that you have concerns about please let Trading Standards know by contacting the [Citizens Advice Consumer Service](#) on 03454 040506.