



One of the most important factors in the smooth operation of ladders is the proper use of ladder commands. All persons working with ladders should be familiar with the exact communication that takes place when executing a ladder evolution. Generally only one person will be tasked with issuing the ladder commands.

By standardizing the ladder language it is the intent that this will facilitate ladder operations and make for a safer, more consistent, and more efficient ladder evolution. Most of the language or commands are common to ladder terms, consistent with other ladder terminology (Aerial Ladders) or makes the most sense.

The Firefighter at the rear or right rear position shall give most commands ***DURING CARRIES***. The firefighter in front or right front shall give the “STOP” command when the ladder is being positioned on the fire ground.

The Firefighter at the butt position shall give commands when ***RAISING, EXTENDING, LAYING IN, TAKING AWAY, RETRACTING and LOWERING***.

A preparatory command is given prior to any execution of the desired command. The firefighter giving the commands will ensure all other firefighters are prepared for the execution of the desired command, and then give the execution command.

The ladder commands for carries used by the Connecticut Fire Academy are:

PREPARATORY COMMAND

EXECUTION OF COMMAND

“Prepare to Beam”

“BEAM”

Commands used to place the ladder on its beam from a bedded position or from a carry.

“Prepare to Bed”

“BED”

Commands used to lay the ladder on the bed section from a flat carry or when the ladder is being flipped from the fly to bed section or from the beam to bed section. It is preferred to store all ladders on the bed section.

“Prepare to Flip the Ladder”

“FLIP”

Commands used to flip the ladder from the bed to fly section or fly to bed section. It is preferred to store all ladders on the bed section.

“Prepare to Lift”

“LIFT”

Commands used to lift the ladder from the ground when ladder is to be carried.

“Prepare to Move Forward”

“MOVE FORWARD”

Commands used to carry the ladder on the fire ground.

“Prepare to Stop”

“STOP”

Commands used to stop the carry or forward momentum of the carry.

“Prepare for Alley”

“ALLEY”

Commands used to lift ladder from a flat shoulder carry to under the ladder for alley carry.

“Prepare to Shoulder”

“SHOULDER”

Commands used to lower ladder from alley carry to flat shoulder carry.

“Prepare to Roll”

“ROLL”

Commands used to change direction of carry. Must be performed from a stop.



The commands for raising and lowering ladders used by the Connecticut Fire Academy are:

PREPARATORY COMMAND

“Prepare to Raise”

Commands used to raise the ladder vertical from a bed or beam position.

“Prepare to Extend”

Commands used to extend the fly section(s) of the ladder.

“Prepare to Lay It In”

Commands used to lay the ladder against the building.

“Prepare to Take Away”

Commands used to pull the ladder away from the building.

“Prepare to Retract”

Commands used to retract the fly section(s) from an extended position.

“Prepare to Lower”

Commands used to lower the ladder to the ground or position to be carried.

“Prepare to Step out”

Commands used during the lowering of the ladder to direct beam firefighter(s) to step out from under ladder and continue lowering it to the ground or into a carry.

EXECUTION OF COMMAND

“RAISE”

“EXTEND”

“LAY IT IN”

“TAKE AWAY”

“RETRACT”

“LOWER”

“STEP OUT”

The Connecticut Fire Academy also uses standardized communications while executing ladder operations. These include:

“Straight Arm Carry, Flat Shoulder or Low Shoulder”

Command used to inform partner(s) which carry will be executed.

“Ladder coming through”

Command used to alert others on the fire ground that you are operating nearby with a ladder.

“Check for Obstructions”

Command is given prior to spotting, raising or lowering the ladder. This safety order checks area for hazards, both overhead and ground obstructions.

“Clear”

Response given after checking for and to alert others that the area is clear of obstructions.

“Beam Raise or Flat Raise”

Command used to inform partner(s) which raise will be executed.

“Dogs locked”

Command and response given by all members of the ladder team ensuring the ladder locks or dogs/pawls have been secured when ladder is extended. This should be performed prior to Butt Firefighter releasing halyard.

“3, 2, 1 Building”

Command used to by tip/beam to notify team person how close ladder tip is to making contact with building.