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Climb Your Way to Safety

Using ladders safely prevents serious injuries

Falling off a ladder, even a small one, can injure you badly or even kill you. That is why using ladders carefully is so important.

Choose Your Ladder Wisely

The type of ladder you choose—stepladder, straight ladder, or extension ladder—will depend on the job you need to do and how high you need to be to do it.

Always make sure that the ladder you choose is the right height for the job. And before you use it, give it a quick safety check.

- Are the rungs or steps firm and unbroken? Are they clean and free of dirt and grease?
- Does it have nonslip safety feet in good condition?
- If it's a stepladder, does it have a spreader to lock the ladder open?
- If it's an extension ladder, is the rope in good condition? Are the rope and pulleys working smoothly?

Set It Up Right

Here are some important points to keep in mind when setting up straight ladders and extension ladders. (The first two points apply to stepladders, too.)

- Place the ladder on a level surface.
- Use wide boards under the feet if you are on soft ground.
- Place the feet parallel with the top support.
- Leave at least 3 feet of extension above the top point of support.
- Anchor the ladder at the top, and have someone hold the bottom for you.
- Make sure the base of the ladder is placed 1 foot out from the wall for every 4 feet of the ladder's height. (An easy way to do this is to count the number of rungs from the ground to the support point at the top and divide by 4.
Example: 8 rungs = 2 feet. Keep the ladder 2 feet from the wall.)

Remember, a fall from a ladder can leave you laid up for days or weeks with broken bones, back injuries, or worse. Make sure you're safe every time you climb.

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WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

These days, violence in the workplace is becoming all too common. One in six of all violent crimes occur in the workplace. Homicide is now second only to motor vehicles as a cause of work-related deaths.

Certain acts or attitudes, especially in combination, may signal problems. There may be a potential for violence in a person who:

- Threatens violence against others.
- Vows to get even with bosses or co-workers.
- Makes a habit of threatening or intimidating others.
- Says people are out to get him or her.
- Talks a lot about weapons—and may own them.
- Holds grudges.
- Blames others for problems or setbacks.
- Gets angry very easily and often.
- Is very defensive when criticized.

If you're dealing with a threatening or angry person:

Do

- Stay calm and be polite.
- Look the person in the eye.
- Don't argue, yell, or threaten.
- Get help if the person doesn't calm down.
- If you're attacked, try to run away and yell to let Others know you're being attacked.

Don't

- √ Argue or raise your voice.
- √ Respond to a threat with a threat.
- √ Do anything to make the person angry or increase the danger.

Read the Label

Be prepared and protect yourself from hazards

Before you open any chemical container, you should always read the label carefully. Labels tell you important safety and health information. For Example, labels can tell you:

- Name of the chemical—common name and chemical name.
- Name, address, and emergency telephone number of the manufacturer.
- Physical hazards—is it flammable? explosive? radioactive?
- Health hazards resulting from overexposure to the chemical.
- Special storage and handling instructions.
- Basic PPE and safety procedures that should be used when working with the chemical.

Armed with this important information you can take proper precautions. For more information about a chemical, consult the MSDS (material data safety sheet) for that chemical. The MSDS details the chemical's hazards, the protective equipment you'll need, the procedures to follow to use the chemical, and what to do if there's an emergency. If you still have questions, ask your supervisor right away.

Reduce the Risks

Do's and don'ts for portable electrical equipment

Electrical power tools make work a lot easier, but they can be hazardous too. Whenever you're dealing with electricity, the risk of getting a severe shock is present. To prevent injury when working with electrical equipment:

Do . . .

- **Inspect each piece of equipment** before you use it. Check the power
- **Remove damaged equipment** from use immediately. Tag it so no one
- **Use three-pronged grounding extension cords** with all equipment
- **Match plugs with outlets.** Don't use adapters that could interrupt the
- **Use only specially approved electrical tools** for work in areas that are

Don't . . .

- **Use cords to raise or lower equipment.**
- **Fasten cords** with staples, nails, or other means that could damage the
- **Plug or unplug equipment with wet hands.**
- **Handle a wet cord** unless you're wearing insulating protective equipment.

The time to read
chemical labels is
before you start
the job.



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HANDY GUIDE TO HAND PROTECTION

Here's a guide to choosing the right glove for the job:

- **Leather gloves** protect against rough
- **Cotton fabric gloves** are used when
- **Rubber, neoprene, or vinyl gloves**
- **Specially insulated or fire-retardant**
- **Latex gloves** protect against bloodborne
- **Metal mesh gloves** prevent cuts from

When handling chemicals, make sure your gloves are clean and have no rips or holes.

GOOD AND SAFE HOUSEKEEPING

Take time each day to check work conditions. Is your area free of clutter or excess materials? Are aisles and walkways clear of obstructions?

Don't fall into the habit of relying on the custodian or a co-worker to clean up a spill, pick up scrap, or put something in its proper place.

And when you spot a problem you can't correct yourself, report it to your supervisor.

Bloodborne Pathogens

Protect yourself when aiding a bleeding co-worker

Viruses such as HIV and hepatitis B are transmitted through contact with infected blood. The virus can enter your body through the skin, eyes, nose, or mouth. That's why you want to take these simple precautions whenever you're providing first aid for anyone who is bleeding.

- Wear latex or neoprene gloves.
- Cover your eyes with goggles or safety glasses with side shields.
- Use a face shield if blood is spurting.
- If gloves are not immediately available, have the victim apply pressure
- Use tongs, brushes, dust pans, etc. to clean up after an accident involving
- Wear gloves when you dispose of materials used to clean up spilled
- Remove blood-stained clothing and wash it.
- Wash your hands (or any other exposed skin) with soap and water.

Always check personal protective equipment carefully. If it's damaged, don't use it.

Battery Dead?

The *right* way to jump-start your vehicle

Dealing with a dead battery may be a nuisance, but it doesn't have to be dangerous or damaging to your vehicle. Here's a quick step-by-step review of how to jump a battery safely and effectively:

Before you attach the cables:

- Make sure the vehicles do not touch.
- Turn the ignition off.
- Set the parking brake and put the transmission in neutral or park.
- Add water to the battery if needed. Replace caps.
- DO NOT jump start if the fluid in the battery is frozen.
- DO NOT jump start unless both batteries are the same voltage and negative ground.

Attach the cables as follows:

- Clamp one jumper cable to the positive pole (+) of the dead battery. Then clamp the cable's other end to the positive pole of the charged battery.
- Clamp the second cable to the negative pole (-) of the charged battery and clamp the second cable's other end to the dead vehicle's engine block on the side away from the battery.
- Start the vehicle with the charged battery. Then start the disabled vehicle.
- DO NOT stand over the batteries while jump-starting is in progress.

Removing cables:

- Remove the cable from the engine block and the other vehicle's negative pole. Then remove the other cable connecting the positive poles.

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FIRST AID FOR BURNS

Quick and effective first aid for burns is important to prevent infection and other complications. Remember these basic first-aid steps:

- Cut away loose clothing but don't remove clothing that is stuck to a burn.
- First- and second-degree burns may be immersed in cool water (or apply cool compresses) for 15 minutes.
- Never use ice, lotion, ointment, or butter on any burn.
- For second- and third-degree burns, cover the area lightly with a sterile, non-adhesive dressing, elevate the burned area if possible, and get medical help immediately.

SMOKING HAZARDS

- * Cigarette smoking kills more than 300,000 Americans each year, and plays a role in four of the five leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, stroke, and lung diseases.
- * Smoking puts about 4,000 different chemicals into the body, including many toxic substances like arsenic, formaldehyde, and carbon monoxide.
- * Smoking contributes to hardening of the arteries and high blood pressure, both of which can lead to heart attacks.

Safety Warning IQ Test

Would you recognize a warning if you saw one?

Safety symbols and color coding are used to warn of specific hazards in your workplace and to provide essential safety information. Take the quiz below and test your knowledge by matching the color and symbols with the correct definition. (Note: If you get any wrong, find out *now* what the correct answer is. Your life could depend on your being able to identify these warnings.)

Color and Symbol	Definition
___1. Red square	a. Biological hazards
___2. Orange triangle or arrow	b. Dangerous equipment
___3. Yellow band or black and yellow checkers	c. Traffic patterns
___4. Blue circle	d. First aid and safety equipment
___5. Black and white star	e. Caution (struck by, caught in, or slipping hazards)
___6. Purple against yellow	f. Keep away background triangle
___7. Green cross	g. Fire hazards/emergency stop controls
___8. Fluorescent orange or orange with red with 3 circles	h. Radiation hazards

Answers: 1—g; 2—b; 3—e; 4—f; 5—c; 6—h; 7—d; 8—a.

Danger! Oversized Load

Take these easy precautions and prevent injuries

When you're faced with transporting a big, bulky load, make the safe choice:

- **Size up the load.** Before you try to lift it, make sure it's not too heavy. Straining to lift a load that's too heavy is asking for a back injury. Also, make sure that you can get a good grasp on the load. If it's too bulky or an awkward shape, you're likely to drop it before you reach your destination. And make sure you'll be able to see clearly over the load as you carry it.
- **Get help, if necessary.** When a load is too heavy or bulky to carry alone, ask for help. Straining to handle an unmanageable load can cause back strain or other injuries. Be sure to plan out your moves so that you lift and unload at the same time.
- **Divide the load, if possible.** If you can't get help, try to divide the load into smaller, more manageable parts. Then make several trips.
- **Use a handcart.** If it's not possible to divide the load, use a hand cart to help you move it. Place heavy objects on the bottom, with load over axles. Stack lighter objects on top, but don't block your view. With the help of this kind of equipment, you can move large, bulky loads safely and efficiently.

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CLIMBING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Here are some things you should *never* do on or with a ladder:

- **Never** set ladders on boxes or other objects to make a ladder reach higher.
- **Never** try to "walk" a ladder instead of getting down and moving it.
- **Never** stand above the third rung from the top of a straight ladder or above the second highest step of a step ladder.
- **Never** use stepladders as straight ladders. Open stepladders fully and make sure the spreader is securely locked.

THE CUTTING EDGE OF SAFETY

Here are a few tips from the American Medical Association on the care of minor cuts and abrasions:

- **Never** put your mouth over a wound. The mouth harbors germs that could infect the wound.
- **Don't** allow fingers, used handkerchiefs, or other soiled materials to touch the cut. Clean the wound and surrounding skin with soap and warm water, wiping away from the wound.
- **Hold** a sterile pad firmly over the wound until the bleeding stops.
- **Replace** the sterile pad with a bandage to keep the cut clean and dry.