

## Stop Falls Save Lives



### 5 Ways to Prevent Workplace Falls

1. If you're working at 6 feet or more use fall protection.
2. Before starting a job make a fall protection plan.
3. Provide workers with the right equipment for the job.
4. Train everyone to use the equipment safely.
5. Inspect your harness, lanyard and anchorage point before each use.

**May 6 – 10, 2024 is National Safety Stand-Down to Prevent Falls Week.**

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## Falls are 100% Preventable



Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely.

- Determine what safety equipment is needed.
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment.
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job.
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment.
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather.
- Use the correct tool for the job and use it properly.
- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open.
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder.
- Place the ladder on a solid surface and never lean it against an unstable surface.
- A straight or extension ladder should be 1 foot away from the surface it rests on for every 4 feet of height and extend at least 3 feet over the top edge.
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support.
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top.
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder and have someone support the bottom.
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before use.

**Keep Safety First!**

# Guardrail Safety



Nearly all construction sites have unprotected sides and edges, wall openings or floor holes at some point, which pose a hazard to the workers moving around the jobsite. These openings and sides must be protected with guardrails or covers.

## Common Causes of Injury:

- Leading edges.
- Stairwell openings in the floor and stair landings.
- Open-sided balconies, platforms, and lofts.
- Completed decks and porches.
- Low-silled windows less than 39 inches.
- Roof skylight openings.
- Ramps or runways.

## Safe Work Practices

- Guardrails must always be installed around openings in floors, and across openings of walls and windows greater than 18 inches, when the work area is 6 feet or more above a lower level.
- For window openings with a 6 ft. fall hazard, guardrails must be installed if the bottom sill height is less than 39 in. (1.1 m).
- A complete guardrail system consists of: 1) a top rail; 2) a midrail; and 3) a toeboard.
- Install top rails at 42 inches high, with midrails placed halfway between the top of the guardrail top rail and the floor or walking/working surface.
- Install toeboards a minimum of 4 inches along the edge of the walking or working surface to protect from falling debris and objects, such as tools or materials.
- Any stairway with four or more risers or a height of more than 30 inches must be protected by a guardrail system, also known as stair rails.
- Any two inch or greater opening in the floor must be protected and covered.

## Fall Hazards at Home

Are you a weekend warrior or do-it-yourselfer? If you take on home improvement or other weekend projects, it's important to prepare yourself for

physical exertion, especially if you've been sedentary through the winter months, and take extra precautions to prevent falls.

Risky projects, like installing siding, gutters or roofs, are best left to professionals. Saving money isn't worth risking a debilitating or fatal fall.

At home or at work, many of the same rules apply. When taking on a project:

- Practice all of the ladder safety tips mentioned above.
- Keep the work area clear of hazards and immediately clean up spills.
- Read all instructions and safety precautions on your equipment.
- Don't wear loose clothing that can get caught in equipment.

We tend to think we're always safe on flat ground, but the thousands of injuries each year tell us otherwise.

- Falls are the #1 cause of death for older adults: fall-proof your home.
- Keep floors and surfaces clear of clutter.
- Keep file cabinets and desk drawers closed.
- Keep electrical and phone cords out of traffic areas.
- Install handrails on stairways.
- Wear sensible footwear.
- Never stand on chairs, tables or any surface with wheels.
- Properly arrange furniture to create open pathways.
- Maintain good lighting indoors and out.

A fall can end in death or disability in a split second, but with a few simple precautions, you can stay safe at home and at work.

## Did You Know?

May is Mental Health Month. Addressing mental distress in the workplace takes the whole organization, including leadership, human resources, supervisors and managers, safety professionals, and of course, employees themselves.

## Notes From the Editor

Send articles or opinions to:

Bill Devinney, Owner/Safety Consultant  
Safetydude, LLC

4836 Hardware Dr. NE Suite A

Albuquerque, NM 87109

Phone: 505-259-8556

Or e-mail me at [devinneywilliamr@msn.com](mailto:devinneywilliamr@msn.com)