

MAFES Dawg Tracks



February 18, 2008

Four Rules for Ladder Safety



If you have ever fallen from a ladder, you might want to take extra heed to this newsletter. I have! Falling 16 feet from a buckled, bad-quality ladder with paint all over you may not cause any physical injury, but it will cause a lot of bruised pride from the neighbors watching as you fall and roll. So, reading and using these four rules of ladder safety can help you, if you follow them. Obviously, I didn't.

The Four Rules of Ladder Safety are:

- Pick the right ladder for the job that you plan to do.
- Make sure that the ladder is in good condition.
- Set up the ladder correctly.
- Work safely on the ladder.

Pick the Right Ladder:

- The ladder should be the right length and type for the work you plan to do. An ordinary straight ladder is normally used for most purposes. You may have to have an extension ladder for real high work. On some occasions, you may need a free-standing ladder like a step ladder or a ladder with a tool tray.
- Sometimes when a ladder isn't practical, you might need to get a scaffold. Don't ever use a straight metal ladder around a metal electrical installation.....

Check the Condition of the Ladder:

- Avoid using a damaged ladder. Make sure that it is free from rust, corrosion, cracks or other defects. Be sure to check the rungs, side rails, braces, hinges, pulleys and the rope. You also need to make sure that the ladder is free of mud on the rungs, and that the rubber feet are present and in good repair.

Set up the Ladder:

- When using a straight ladder, walk it into position hand over hand. Make sure that the base is on solid ground. Tie the top of the ladder, if it's possible.
- A ladder should be placed against the wall at an angle so that the base of the ladder is one foot away from the wall for every foot of height. This is commonly called the "four up, one out" or "four and one" rule.
- If you are using a stepladder, be sure to check to see that the legs are in a fully opened position and the legs are locked before you use it.
- If you are using an extension ladder, you really need a second person to assist you and make sure that you have ample overlap between each section.
- When you place a ladder against a building to gain access to the roof, make sure that three rungs of the ladder extend above the roof.

Work Safely on the Ladder:

- When climbing or ascending a ladder, always practice the three-point rule of contact, keeping two hands and one foot or one hand and two feet in contact with the ladder at all times.
- Keep yourself centered on the ladder at all times. A good rule to follow is to be sure that your belt buckle is always between the side rails. Refrain from leaning away from the ladder; you can cause it to fall over.
- Don't carry tools in your hands, put them in a belt or hoist them from the ground up in a bucket.
- Do not stand on the top rungs of a ladder.
- Refrain from using a ladder if you are sick or haven't taken drugs or alcohol. Stay off of ladders during inclement weather, like wind, rain or snow.
- In some situations, you may be required to use fall prevention equipment, if so keep it in good condition.

**YOU FALL-YOU CALL-WE HAUL
THAT'S ALL!**

SAFE TODAY - ALIVE TOMORROW !!