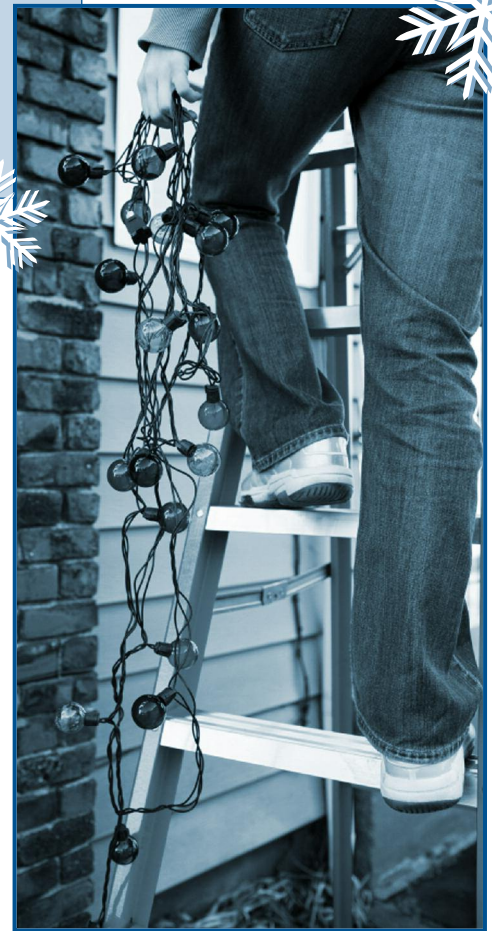


Ladder Safety

This Holiday Season and Always



Decorating our homes with lights, garland, and plastic reindeer in anticipation of the Holiday season will most likely include using a ladder. It's been reported (American Journal of Preventive Medicine, May 2007) that accidents involving ladders has increased dramatically in the last few years, and most injuries are incurred by older men. Ouch!



- **Use the right tools.** The ladder you choose must be the right ladder for the job. Is it tall enough? You must never stand on the top rung or step.
- **Perform a safety check.** Ensure all ladder parts are working properly and firmly secure. The ladder must not be loose or questionable in any way.
- **Be on level ground.** Check the surface the ladder is standing on. Is it smooth and level? Can the ladder slide out from under the user once on the ladder? Always take the time to do this step even if you only plan on stepping up for a moment or two.
- **Heed weight limits.** Your ladder must be rated for the weight of the user plus any equipment accompanying the person. Look at the rating on the side of the ladder.
- **Do not reach.** Do not overreach or lean out excessively from the ladder. (And never rely on a gutter etc. to support you while you do so!) Reposition if necessary.
- **Avoid stormy weather.** Never use ladders in storms or strong winds.
- **Utilize proper footwear.** Do not climb a ladder in bare feet or with sandals. Slip resistant, secure footwear only.
- **One at a time.** Only one person at a time should be on the ladder.
- **Stay in contact with the ladder.** Remember the three-point rule. Always have two feet and one hand, or two hands and one foot on the ladder at all times. Use a tool bag around your waist to store gear when ascending or descending. This will allow you to maintain in control of your position on the ladder.
- **Make safe decisions.** Never get on a ladder if you feel dizzy, light headed, or confused in any way, and never go higher than you are comfortable off the ground.
- **Avoid accidents.** Never place a ladder in front of a closed door that could be opened unexpectedly.
- **No jumping.** Never jump from a ladder. You may become entangled as you leave.