C.L.I.M.B. SAFELY

According to the Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC), falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury mortality nationwide and 43% of fatal falls in the last decade involved a ladder. Louisville Ladder estimates each year nearly 100 people are killed and 160,000 are injured from ladders. Injuries from ladder falls can be severe but are preventable.

Strategies to prevent a ladder fall, C.L.I.M.B. Safely:

Choose the right ladder:
- Evaluate the work environment and know what ladders are available before selecting the right ladder for the job.
- Assess physical requirements of the job including: space available to position ladder, amount of weight on ladder, length of ladder needed to safely perform the job and conductivity involvement.

Look for damaged or missing parts:
- Use a ladder inspection guide to always check for damage prior to using any ladder.
- Never use a damaged ladder. Be sure to label unsafe ladders.

Ensure a safe ladder set-up:
- Control work area from any potential hazards such as: overhead wires/obstructions, clutter on floor around base of ladder, blocking off area around ladder to prevent accidental contact and setting up warning signs at corners.
- Keep extension ladder base one foot away from building for every four feet of ladder’s length and prevent sideways movement. Roof access requires the top of ladder three feet beyond roof line.
- Ensure stepladders always have all four legs on solid level ground with spreaders in fully open position.

Move safely on ladder always with three points of contact:
- Wear slip resistant, clean shoes for maximum traction.
- Keep hands free when climbing and always maintain three points of contact. Climb slowly and surely.
- Always face the ladder keeping your belt buckle centered and as close to the ladder as possible. Do not overreach or lean while working.
- Never move a ladder while on it. Climb down and reposition.

Be a ladder safety expert – not a statistic:

Findings from a Bureau of Labor Statistics study of 1,400 ladder accidents showed:
- 57% of fall victims were holding objects with one or both hands while climbing or descending the ladder;
- 30% had wet, greasy, or oily shoes;
- 53% of straight ladders had not been secured or braced at the bottom and 61% had not been secured at the top;
- 66% had never been trained in how to inspect ladders for defects prior to using them; and
- 73% had not been provided with or consulted written instructions on the safe use of ladders.

Produced in partnership with Bureau of State Risk Management and the UW System