

SAFETY

Ladder Safety Should Be Tops for Home Improvers

NewsUSA

(NU) -As the warm weather of spring and summer arrives, ambitious and well-intentioned homeowners embark on cleaning, maintenance, and improvement projects that often involve roofs, gutters, and ladders. However, working on a ladder can be dangerous.

Consider this: every year, approximately 164,000 people visit emergency rooms in the United States because of ladder accidents, according to data from the World Health Organization.

Underscoring the fact that lack of knowledge about ladder safety is a growing problem are recent survey results published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine which found that the number of ladder-related injuries in the United States has increased by more than 50 percent in 15 years.

Professionals and nonprofessionals alike can benefit by keeping some safety tips in mind, courtesy of the Consumer Product Safety Commission:

-Stand firm. When positioning a ladder anywhere around your home, be sure to place it level on firm ground.

-Have a partner, but go solo. When climbing a ladder, have another person with you to hold the lower end for extra safety and support. However, only one person at a time should be on a ladder so it doesn't become top-heavy and fall over.

-Don't go to the top. Never stand on the top rung of a ladder, and don't reach from a ladder. Instead, climb down and move the ladder to the location of your choice.



-Watch for doors. Never place a ladder near a door that can be opened; an unexpected exit could lead to a ladder accident.

-Be shoe smart. Wear shoes with clean, dry soles when working on ladders. Avoid sandals or flip flops.

Most importantly, don't forget the rule of three: According to the American Ladder Institute, the "Three Points of Contact" rule means keeping either two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand in contact with the steps, rungs, or side rails of a ladder at all times to reduce chances of a slip or fall.

Gutter cleaning and maintenance are among the highest risk activities for ladder injuries. One option to reduce the risk is to install rain dispersal gutters that don't require routine cleaning.

Products such as the Rainhandler Rain Dispersal system are engineered to keep leaves and debris out of gutters.

Visit www.rainhandler.com for more information about how the right gutter management can simplify home maintenance.