

Article for March 9, 2016

### Ladder Safety

I'm so excited to think you might now have used our safety suggestions to begin your spring cleaning and even do some much-needed yardwork. Are you ready to do some home repairs? You might need to know that approximately 90,000 people visit the emergency room each year because of ladder mishaps. So, if you've got plans to tackle jobs that require the use of a ladder, here are some great tips to remember:

- Read the manufacturer's instructions that come with your ladder. They contain guidelines for weight and height limits as well as for the proper use of their product.
- Inspect the ladder before using it to make sure there are no loose or broken rungs.
- Make sure the ladder is the right height for the job. Many accidents happen when people overextend their reach because their ladders are too short.
- Never stand on a ladder's bucket shelf.
- Make sure the ladder is completely open and that all of its feet are planted on a firm, level surface. Extension ladders should not be placed at an angle that is too extreme.
- Avoid using a metal ladder near electrical sources.
- Face the ladder when climbing and descending.
- Keep weight centered between the two rails.
- Maintain three points of contact with the ladder while climbing. Half of all ladder related accidents were due to individuals carrying items as they climbed.

These are just a few of the safety precautions to consider this time of year. It's also a great time to replace your smoke detector batteries, make sure your fire extinguishers are charged and placed in proper locations around your home. Be certain that you test your flashlights and battery-powered radio for spring storms. Continue to take the right precautions for spring cleaning and Be Safe Out There!