

THE

CONNECTION

DECEMBER 2006

Winter Home Safety

Check connecting water hoses at the clothes washer, refrigerator ice maker and dishwasher for cracks or bubbles. Replace if you find any deterioration or leaking.

Check your carbon monoxide and smoke detectors monthly to make sure they are in good working condition with fresh batteries.

Walk through your home and check all electrical cords and outlets for signs of wear.

If you have a gas-fired water heater, check to make sure it is venting properly. Drain five to ten gallons from the bottom of your water heater to clean it of sludge until the water is clear. Test the pressure relief valve to confirm it is not blocked by mineral deposits.



COVERING FLOOR OPENINGS

It was a small hole - barely big enough for a man to fit through. Terry was going to cover it in the next hour. He grabbed a sheet of 4'x8' plywood from the stack, threw it over the hole and went to lunch. Along came Will and Jake, who needed just such a sheet of plywood. Wondering why someone had left

good plywood lying on the floor instead of stacked,

they decided to use the piece on the floor. Naturally, with the plywood between them, they didn't see the hole. Suddenly, Jake was standing alone, with one end of a piece of plywood. All that remained of Will was a series of colorful comments coming from the floor below.

We can laugh at this story because Will escaped with only a few bruises, but you can bet that he made sure Terry didn't make the same mistake again. Covering a floor opening, so that other people don't get hurt, calls for more than just laying the material over the hole or even nailing it down. There's a right way to do everything, and doing less than the right way results in less than complete accident prevention.

Never leave a floor hole unguarded, even for a few minutes. Choose a floor covering that is big enough to overlap the edge of the hole generously. It should be thick enough to cover the hole without sagging in the middle. The bigger the hole, the thicker the covering should be. Unless you intend to stand there and warn everyone who might possibly go past that hole, nail the cover down, even if it's only going to be there an hour. Why take chances? If someone you work with ends up in the hospital because of your carelessness, you've not only disrupted someone else's life, you've also increased your own workload while the other worker is laid up and probably put your job on the line.

One more thing. If you see a hole that is unguarded, not covered, or improperly covered, whose business is it? The answer is, it's everybody's business. Even if it means taking time out from a tight work schedule, report improperly covered holes immediately. Taking responsibility for others' safety is good for business and that's good for you.

Parlay International

HOLIDAY Stress

To reduce holiday stresses, try these tips:

Make a spending budget and stick to it.

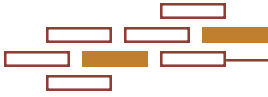
Don't overbuy.

Try buying gifts as early as possible. Some of the best holiday buys are found in the late summer.

Visit friends and relatives regularly. Keep in touch if you feel stressed.

Visit someone who can't get out or give an unexpected gift or charitable donation.

Keep your pace relaxed. Don't rush around at the last minute. Keep a schedule that allows you to get everything done on time.



Protect Workers from the Cold

The cold weather is here and will be around for a few more months. Workers in construction, commercial fishing, maritime, and agriculture particularly need to take precautions. Prolonged exposure to cold temperatures may cause serious health problems such as trench foot, frostbite and hypothermia. In extreme cases, including cold water immersion, exposure can lead to death. Danger signs include uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, clumsy movements, fatigue, and confused behavior. If these signs are observed, emergency help is needed. Avoid cold weather related injuries by taking these precautions:

Recognize the environmental and

workplace conditions that may be dangerous.

Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses and injuries and what to do to help workers.

Wear proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions, including layers that can be adjusted to changing conditions.

Remember, workers face increased risks when they take certain medications, are in poor physical condition, or suffer from illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, or cardiovascular disease.



Scaling the Heights of Safety

Walking under a ladder is said to bring bad luck. But working unsafely on a ladder can bring you more than bad luck. In fact, falls lead motor vehicle accidents as the number one cause of emergency room visits. Take ladder safety seriously by following these basic safe work practices.

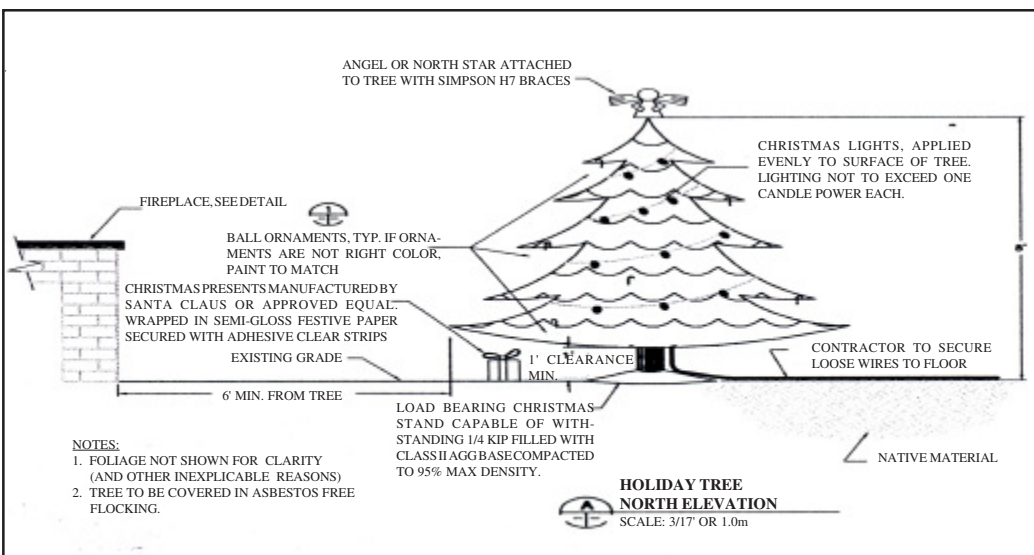
Do not exceed the load capacity of a ladder. The manufacturer's recommendation for load capacity can be found on the ladder itself. The ladder should be rated to handle your weight plus the weight of the tools or equipment you'll be working with while on the ladder.

Use the right ladder for the job. When working near electrical sources, for example, use a dry wooden ladder or one made of nonconductive material.

Set ladders on stable and level surfaces. Under certain circumstances, ladders may need to be secured to prevent accidental movement.

Keep the area around the top and bottom of the ladder free from tools and other obstructions.

Never move, shift, or extend a ladder while it's in use.



When climbing up or down a ladder, face the ladder and use at least one hand to hold on to the siderail. Don't carry tools in your hand when climbing - use a tool belt.

Do not tie or fasten ladders together to create longer sections, unless they have been specifically designed for such use.

Keep Ladders free of oil, grease, and other slipping hazards.

Inspect the ladder before each use for defects that pose safety hazards. A loose rung can result in serious injury.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (269) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, MI 49083. Also visit our website at: www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com

