# Safety Matters

*Produced by the Insurance Coverage Office*

**State of Delaware** **Issue XLVII** **July 2010**

## Clean Out Accidents

### Good housekeeping on the job

Mom was right all those times she reminded you that "there's a place for everything and everything in its place." This is especially true at work where an effective housekeeping program can make a big difference in preventing accidents, fires, explosions, and occupational diseases.

Good housekeeping provides other benefits as well:

- ✓ Encourages efficiency
- ✓ Utilizes space better
- ✓ Keeps inventory at a minimum
- ✓ Helps control property damage
- ✓ Provides a good appearance of your facility and impresses the customer
- ✓ Reflects a well-run organization
- ✓ Encourages better work habits
- ✓ Minimizes janitorial work
- ✓ Makes jobs easier and working conditions more pleasant

On the other hand, here is what a disorganized workplace is full of:

- × Cluttered and poorly arranged areas
- × Untidy piling of materials
- × Items stored that are no longer needed
- × Blocked aisles, stairways, and exits
- × Materials stuffed in corners and out-of- the-way places
- × Materials gathering rust and dirt from nonuse
- × Overcrowded storage areas and shelves
- × Overflowing bins and containers
- × Broken containers and damaged materials
- × Combustible materials stored near sources of ignition

Tackle your housekeeping chores by being responsible for your work areas. Use a housekeeping checklist to evaluate each area before and after every shift. Mom was also right when she stated that a "a woman's work is never done," because housekeeping chores require constant vigilance. Indeed, "a worker's housekeeping work is never done."

But keeping the workplace clean and organized results in being proud of your job, your workplace, and the products you produce. You'll be safer, healthier, more efficient, and more profitable.

**DID YOU KNOW...**

- Approximately 70% of slips and falls occur on level ground?
- According to the US Department of Labor, the average cost of injury from a slip and fall injury is roughly $28,000.00?
- There are three easy methods of preventing slips, trips and falls?
  1. Report spills and/or clean them up immediately
  2. Apply anti-slip floor coatings or non-skid tape to slippery floor surfaces
  3. Prevent/keep work areas from getting cluttered and obstructed

## *News & Notes*

**GOING UP?**

Ladders create several potential hazards that you need to know in order to avoid falls, injuries, and lost workdays. Here are the three basic hazards of ladder safety:

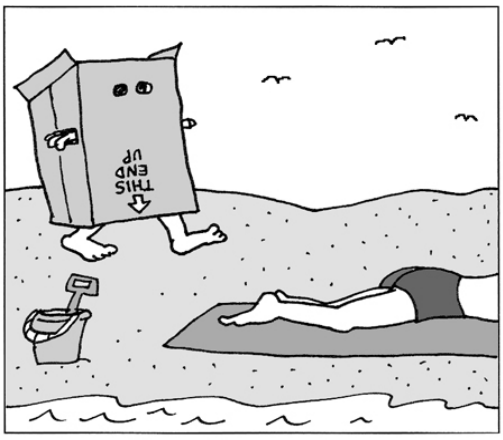
**1. Poor condition.** If a ladder is missing parts or has broken parts, it's not going to be able to support a person safely.

**2. Improper selection.** Not every ladder is right for every job.

**3. Improper use.** Ladders are not platforms, scaffolds, skids, or braces.

Always inspect a ladder before use and include ladders in general safety inspect ions. Whether the ladder is wooden or metal, check that:

- Steps and rungs are all in place, intact, free from grease or oil, have slip resistant surfaces, and are firmly attached.
- Support braces, bolts, and screws are all in place and tight.
- Metal parts are lubricated.
- Rope is not worn or frayed.
- Spreaders or other locking devices are in place.
- Splinters or sharp edges are removed.
- Safety feet are in place.
- Metal ladders are not dented or bent.




**The refrigerator box: 100% UV protection.**

**Safety Tip of the Month**

Pools may be a hotspot for summer fun, but they're no place for horseplay. Pushing someone into a pool or otherwise being unsafe can cause severe, even fatal, injuries. Basic swimming lessons are recommended for anyone who regularly visits a pool, and posted safety instructions should always be obeyed.

**Riddles of the Month**

1). Which house weighs the least?
2). Why is a river so rich?
3). What is in between you?
4). How many seconds are there in a year?
5). Which is faster heat or cold? Explain.
6). If your dog loses his tail, where would you find it?

**Answers on Page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces**

# *Safety Bits & Pieces*

### DON'T FALL FOR SLIPS AND TRIPS

Slip, trip, and fall hazards are common on the job. They include:

- ⇨ Spills and wet floors
- ⇨ Inadequate lighting
- ⇨ Clutter
- ⇨ Open drawers
- ⇨ Flooring problems
- ⇨ Failure to keep work areas neat
- ⇨ Not watching where you're going
- ⇨ Running or walking too fast
- ⇨ Failure to use handrails on stairs
- ⇨ Lack of caution on stairs and ladders
- ⇨ Wearing inappropriate shoes

Take steps to eliminate these hazards in your work area, and step carefully in areas where hazards can't be eliminated.

### HOW GERMY IS YOUR WORKSTATION?

The average workstation has 400 times more germs than a toilet seat, according to office product manufacturer Grand & Toy. Office desk items like keyboards, computer mice, and telephones as well as tools and other workstation items can carry a lot of germs and bacteria.

Fortunately, you can take steps to reduce the risk of getting sick. For example, use disinfectant regularly to clean work surfaces and equipment. Use a hand sanitizer to clean your hands before eating or drinking. **NOTE:** If you do use a hand sanitizer, make sure it contains at least 60 percent ethanol (alcohol). A recent study reveals that sanitizers with lower concentrations of ethanol are ineffective.

### GASOLINE SAFETY

Follow these safety tips from American Burn Association whenever you handle gas:

- ➲ Don't smoke or use matches, lighters, or other ignition sources anywhere around gas. Gas vapors can travel far from gas containers in enclosed areas.
- ➲ Use gas only in well-ventilated areas.
- ➲ Turn off equipment and let cool before filling the gas tank.
- ➲ Never use gasoline to start charcoal on a grill—use proper charcoal starter.
- ➲ Never use gas as a cleaning fluid or solvent—or to clean your hands.
- ➲ Don't store gas cans in your vehicle.
- ➲ Store gas in approved containers in a cool, well-ventilated area, such as a shed or garage, but never in the house, and only keep a minimum amount on hand.
- ➲ Never use glass or plastic bottles for gasoline storage.

### RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

1). A lighthouse
2). Because it has two banks
3). The letter (o)
4). 12; the 2nd of January, the 2nd of February, the 2nd of March, etc.
5).Heat! Because you can catch a cold!
6). From the re-tail store

# Ladder Limits

## All ladders are not equal

Select the right ladder for the job. Ladders are rated by how much weight they can safely hold. The weight limits include both the worker and equipment.

- ➲ I-A means it can hold 300 pounds (heavy duty)
- ➲ I holds 250 pounds (heavy duty)
- ➲ II holds 225 pounds (medium duty)
- ➲ III holds just 200 pounds (light)

Ladder length also has limits:

- ➲ A stepladder should be no more than 20 feet high.
- ➲ A one-section ladder should be no more than 30 feet high.
- ➲ An extension ladder can go to 60 feet, but the sections must overlap.

You also need to set up ladders properly.

- ➲ Place ladder on level surface; use wide boards under it if it's on soft ground.
- ➲ Set the feet so they're parallel with the surface the ladder rests against.
- ➲ Extend the ladder so there are at least 3 feet above the top support.
- ➲ Anchor the top and either tie the bottom or have someone hold it.
- ➲ Don't rest the ladder on a window or window sash or place it in front of a door unless the door is locked or blocked.
- ➲ Position the ladder so that the distance from the ladder base to the wall is one-fourth the length of the ladder.
- ➲ Position an extension ladder before you extend it.

### ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

### QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

*"The complete life, the perfect pattern, includes old age as well as youth and maturity. The beauty of the morning and the radiance of noon are good, but it would be a very silly person who drew the curtains and turned on the light in order to shut out the tranquillity of the evening. Old age has its pleasures, which, though different, are not less than the pleasures of youth."*

**W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM**,
*The Summing Up*

## From the State of Delaware's Office of Highway Safety...

# Sobering News

Did you know that impaired driving is still a serious issue in Delaware? Even though we have seen significant reductions in alcohol-related fatalities, still 48 (or 41%) of the state's 118 traffic deaths were alcohol-related last year. Nationally, estimates are that three in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol related crash in their lives. The numbers are even more staggering when you consider that an impaired driving crash is completely preventable.

For those who choose to drink and drive, here are some sobering facts:

- Those convicted of a first time DUI offense in Delaware can expect to lose their driver's license for up to twelve months,
- Will be required to attend an 8-week DUI treatment class,
- And pay nearly $4,000 in court, treatment, DMV, and lawyer's fees.
- Plus, missed time at work

***Alcohol and driving simply don't mix. Drive Sober. Arrive Alive DE.***