

Spot The Safety Violation: Holiday Ladder Safety Tips



Yes, this scene is staged. But it depicts what could be a real safety incident. How could such an incident be avoided'

Many workplaces hang [decorations](#) during the holidays to make it more festive. And many workers similarly hang lights and other decorations at home, too. But even workers trained to [safely use ladders on the job](#) may take shortcuts when using ladders to decorate at home.

Staged scenes such as the one in [this picture](#) seem to be quite popular this time of year. But people really do fall from ladders when hanging lights'and rarely do such events end up being very funny. For example, on Nov. 25, 2016, a man in Tennessee died after falling while putting up Christmas decorations. He was reportedly hanging lights on the outside of his home while standing on a ladder when he fell. He was taken to a nearby hospital, where he died from his injuries.

HOLIDAY LADDER SAFETY TIPS

Here are some ladder safety tips from [Workplace Safety North](#) to give your workers this holiday season, which they can use both at work and at home:

1. Use a ladder that meets the CSA standard and is of a grade suitable for the task (and your weight). Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and safety warnings.
2. [Before using a ladder](#), check the following:
 - Danger label on side of the ladder warning of falling hazard
 - Right height for the job
 - Non-slip feet
 - No signs of warping, rust or corrosion
 - No missing parts
 - Placed on [level, firm footing](#)
 - Securely locked and braced into place.
3. Make sure there are no [power lines](#) or exposed electrical wiring near the ladder. Never use ladders during storms, or in wet or windy weather.
4. Lean the ladder against the wall at a ratio of 4:1 to stop it from falling over. For example, if the ladder is four metres tall, place the foot of the ladder one metre from the wall.
5. When climbing a ladder:

- Always wear enclosed slip-resistant shoes or boots
- Have someone hold the ladder at the base
- Climb up the centre of the ladder, holding it with both hands'it's important to maintain a minimum of three points of contact on the ladder.
- Carry any tools in a tool belt
- Never stand on the [top cap](#) or the tread immediately below the top cap.

6. When working on a ladder:

- Always grip the ladder with one hand
- Work within arm's reach of the ladder
- If you can't easily reach what you need to, climb down and safely reposition the ladder
- Be careful when pulling items from gutters or roofs, which may make you lose balance.

7. Don't use a ladder if you're affected by medication or a health condition that may cause you to lose balance. And avoid using a ladder if you're alone or can't get help in the case of an incident.