

National Safety Stand – Down

To Prevent Injuries from Falls

Custodial

The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) has announced May 2-6, 2016, as the official week for the third annual National Safety Stand Down. The event is a nationwide effort to remind and educate employers and workers of the serious dangers of falls that remain the leading cause of lost work-day and fatal injuries. Employers and workers are encouraged to pause during their workday for topic discussions, demonstrations and training on how to recognize hazards and prevent falls.

Villanova University participated in this initiative in 2014, and we're proud of the Certificate presented to us by OSHA. This year OSHA expects thousands of employers and possibly as many as four million workers to participate in the Stand Down.

The National Safety Stand Down in 2016 is part of the University's ongoing Fall Prevention Campaign, which provides employees with information and educational materials on how to prevent falls, provide the right equipment for our employees and train all employees on its proper use. Some of the initiatives the University will implement include:

- The release and implementation of a comprehensive Fall Protection Policy.
- Conducting Tool Box Talks by members of the Employee Safety Committee.
- University involvement in the OSHA initiative.
- Providing training for employees directly affected by fall potential, and education for the remaining staff.

In our department working from ladders is fairly routine. It's especially so during the summer when we're doing blitz cleaning, or doing mold remediation. We can never overlook the fact that working from ladders can be dangerous if the correct safety procedures are not followed. Let's look at some steps we can take to reduce the risk of injury from falling:

GUIDELINES ON LADDER SAFETY

1. GENERAL

- You must visually inspect any ladder that you're going to use for visible defects before you use it – every time!
- Be sure tha the ladder can sustain at least 4 times the maximum intended load.
- Apply the old addage – “take good care of ladders and they'll take care of you.”

National Safety Stand – Down

To Prevent Injuries from Falls

Custodial

2. PLACEMENT

- Ladders, including step ladders, shall be placed so that each side rail is on a level and firm footing and so that the ladder is rigid, stable and secure.
- The side rails shall not be supported by boxes, loose bricks, or other loose packing.
- No ladder shall be placed in front of a door opening towards the ladder unless the door is fastened open, locked or guarded.
- Whenever possible, a ladder used as a place from which a person has to work shall rise to a height of at least 3 feet above the highest rung upon which the person must stand to work.

3. SECURING

- Ladders shall be securely fixed at the top and foot so that they cannot move either from their top or from their bottom points of rest. If this is not possible, then a person should stand at the base of the ladder and secure it manually against slipping.
- Ladders set up in public thoroughfares or other places (where there is potential for accidental collision with them) must be provided with effective means to prevent the displacement of the ladders due to collisions, for example, use of barricades.

4. USE

- Only one person at a time may use or work from a single ladder.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending it.
- Keep three limbs on the ladder at any one time, i.e., both hands and one foot or both feet and one hand.
- Carry tools in a tool belt, pouch or holster, not in your hands, so you can keep hold of the ladder.
- Wear fully enclosed slip resistant footwear when using the ladder.
- Do not climb higher than the third rung from the top of the ladder
- When working from a ladder, always work within an easy arm's reach from the ladder.
- Don't "walk" a ladder while standing on it. Get down off the ladder to move it to another location.
- Do not use a ladder or step ladder if it is defective. Report it to your supervisor.
- No metal ladder and no ladder reinforced with wire shall be used in the vicinity of any electrical conductor or of any electrified equipment or apparatus that may result in a person receiving an electric shock.