

Safe at **Work** ■ Safe at **Home**



Ohio

Bureau of Workers' Compensation



Protect yourself from common hazards on and off the clock

At the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, it's our mission to protect Ohio's workers and employers through the prevention, care, and management of workplace injuries and illnesses. Our focus is helping Ohio employers maintain and grow a safe, healthy, competitive and productive workforce.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) enforces regulations to keep workers safe. However, it does not cover hazards encountered after leaving work to go home. Many of us recognize hazards present in our workplace, but we don't think about these similar hazards being present in our homes. **A safe workforce starts with a healthy home.** Precautions to protect yourself and your family at home are often similar to safe practices you would follow at work. This brochure highlights common hazards and how to stay safe if you encounter them.

Electrical Safety

Exposure to electricity leads to electric shocks, burns, explosions and electrocution. A person's body can accidentally become part of a circuit, resulting in electric shock. The effects range from a tingling sensation to cardiac arrest.

Some common conditions that cause electrical accidents are improper installation of equipment, exposed wiring and overloading electrical circuits.

De-energize circuits before inspecting or repairing. Extension cords are for temporary use. Do not plug cords into each other or use with major appliances. Replace any damaged electrical cords and equipment.

Call a qualified electrician for help if you find:

- Overheating outlets or switches;
- Frequently blown fuses or tripped circuits;
- Lights that dim or flicker;
- Appliances that spark or emit a burning smell.



Biological Hazards

Mold grows in areas with moisture or high humidity. Common symptoms of exposure are runny nose, coughing, sneezing, eye irritation and skin rash. Prevent mold growth by maintaining low humidity. Repair leaks and prevent new ones from forming.

Stings from bees, wasps and hornets cause pain, swelling and skin redness. Protect yourself from mosquito bites by using repellents containing DEET. You can usually treat symptoms from bug bites with over-the-counter medications; more severe reactions require medical attention.

Contact with poisonous plants can produce itching, swelling, blisters and a rash that may last days. Wash affected areas and clothing with soap and cold water. Reduce swelling by taking antihistamines and applying cold compresses or ice. Avoid exposure by covering skin and learn to identify common species such as poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac.

Yardwork Safety

Read the owner's manual before using equipment. Pay attention to safety precautions. Inspect equipment before use. Ensure the area around you is clear. Do not leave running equipment unattended.

Make sure hand tools are in good condition. Keep blades sharp. Always cut away from your body. When finished, clean tools and store them in a safe, enclosed space. Generally, you should wear tight-fitting clothing, long-sleeved shirts, long pants and gloves. Wear safety glasses to protect your eyes from flying debris and earplugs if there is noise exposure.

Before digging holes or trenches, check with local utility companies for approval. Contact the Ohio Utility Protection Service at 8-1-1 or 1-800-362-2764 at least 48 hours before beginning work.



Chemical Safety

Chemical exposure can lead to serious illness and even death. The routes of exposure are inhalation, ingestion, injection and skin contact. Remember to read warning labels and always follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe use and storage. Keep chemicals in their original container. Do not mix unless instructed to by the manufacturer.

Harmful substances can be corrosive, flammable, reactive or toxic. Wear safety gear such as gloves, safety glasses, face shields and respirators when handling chemicals. Do not leave open containers unattended.

To reduce inhalation exposure, ventilate by turning on a fan and opening windows. You may need a respirator depending on the chemical. Wear proper clothing to cover exposed skin. If you suspect skin exposure, wash the affected area. In case of ingestion, immediately call emergency responders and Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

Heat Stress

Heat exhaustion is a response to excessive loss of water and salt through sweat. Symptoms include headache, nausea, dizziness, thirst, heavy sweating, elevated body temperature and decreased urine output.

Heat stroke occurs when the body cannot control its temperature. The sweating mechanism fails, and the body cannot cool down. Symptoms include confusion, slurred speech, loss of consciousness, hot and dry skin, seizure, and high body temperature (104° or higher). Seek immediate emergency treatment to help prevent permanent disability or death.



Drink 8 ounces every 20 minutes during the activity.

Follow these tips for keeping your cool

Drink water. Drink up to 16 ounces of fluid before beginning activity. Drink 8 ounces every 20 minutes during the activity. Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic beverages.

Take frequent breaks and acclimate to the heat slowly (five to seven days of exposure). Increase work time by 20 percent each day.

Wear loose, thin synthetic fabrics to help the skin stay cool. Avoid restrictive clothing that reduces the ability to evaporate sweat.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) helps reduce exposure to health hazards. Use PPE when you cannot eliminate hazards by other means. Assess the workspace for hazards to determine what PPE you will need. Proper maintenance and care will ensure an adequate level of protection.

Head

Helmets protect against falling objects or from bumping into objects above the head. Inspect for damage like deep scratches, dents, gouges and cracks.

Hands

Gloves reduce exposure to the hands. They are made from a variety of materials to protect from different hazards. You can also wear sleeves in addition to gloves to protect the upper arms.

Feet

Proper shoes can protect from crush injuries, punctures or slips. Look for slip-resistant shoes to provide traction. Consider steel-toed shoes to reduce the risk of damage from crushing, rolling or falling hazards. Wear boots with ankle support if needed.

Eyes and face

Safety glasses come in different forms depending on the hazard. Attachments such as side shields are available to protect from flying debris. Safety glasses are also available with prescription or UV lenses. Use face shields to supplement eye protection.

Ears

Excessive noise can result in hearing loss. The best way to prevent this is to reduce noise in the work environment. Ear-plugs and earmuffs are rated for different noise levels, so select the right type for your needs. Ensure proper fit and wear at all times while working.





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Follow these tips to stay safe on ladders

- Inspect your ladder before use to ensure it is in good working condition.
- Use the right ladder for the job. If it's too short, get a taller one.
- Do not overreach. Keep your belt buckle between the sides of the ladder at all times.
- Only use step ladders in the fully opened and locked position.
- Do not stand on the top rung or top cap of a step ladder or the top rungs of an extension ladder.
- When using an extension ladder ensure someone holds the base of the ladder to keep it steady.
- Follow the 4-to-1 rule with extension ladders. For every 4 feet of ladder length you need to set the base of the ladder 1 foot away from the wall.

Roof Safety

It's best to make roof repairs on a warm, clear day when materials are dry. Prepare supplies in advance. Use a rope pulley or harness to hoist tools. Proper footwear can be any sturdy shoe with good tread. Wear kneepads to prevent fatigue or injury from sharp objects. Always use a safety harness tied off to something sturdy.

Choose the proper ladder size for the job you're doing. The duty rating must be greater than the weight of the climber and objects carried on the ladder. Place ladders on firm level ground; do not use in conditions that can throw off your balance. There should only be one person at a time on the ladder. Use three-points of contact when climbing to increase stability.



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