

RISK SERVICES

EMPLOYEE SAFETY UPDATE

NATIONAL LADDER SAFETY MONTH



National Ladder Safety Month, observed in March and organized by the American Ladder Institute (ALI), is the only month dedicated exclusively to promoting ladder safety at home and work. Each year, tens of thousands of injuries and hundreds of deaths are caused by ladder misuse. The ALI works to raise awareness on safe ladder use in an effort to help decrease the number of injuries.

Choosing the right ladder for the job is an important aspect of ladder safety. Ladders are built from one of three basic materials: wood, fiberglass and metal (aluminum). When choosing your ladder, consider the following:

- The environment of your worksite. What kind of surface will the ladder be resting on? Is the work area crowded?
- The duty rating of the ladder, which is the indication of the maximum weight capacity the ladder can safely carry.
- The ladder variety — including articulated ladder, combination ladder, single ladder or stepladder.

Here are some other tips to keep you safe while using a ladder:

- Maintain ladders free of oil, grease and other slip hazards.
- Do not load ladders beyond their maximum intended load or beyond the manufacturer’s rated capacity.
- Do not use ladders on slippery surfaces, unless they’re secured or provided with slip-resistant feet.
- Take steps to secure ladders in areas where they can be displaced by work activities.
- Keep areas clear around the top and bottom of ladders.
- Do not move, shift or extend ladders while in use.
- Use ladders equipped with nonconductive side rails if the worker or the ladder could contact exposed, energized electrical equipment.
- Face the ladder when moving up or down.
- Use at least one hand to grasp the ladder when climbing.
- Do not carry objects or loads that could cause loss of balance and falling.

Please do not post or share on any internet or intranet.



Eye protection: Impact hazards

It's important to know the best type of eye protection to wear to protect against impact hazards and how to properly care for and maintain it.

Impact hazards. The majority of impact injuries are caused by flying or falling objects, such as large chips, fragments, particles, sand, dirt or sparks striking the eye. Most of these objects are smaller than the head of a pin and can cause serious injuries such as punctures, scratches and bruises.

Impact hazards can result from many types of work operations, including chipping, grinding, masonry, riveting, woodworking, sawing, drilling, chiseling and sanding.

To protect against impact injuries to your eyes in hazardous work areas, always wear safety glasses with side shields or goggles, even when wearing a face shield. A face shield alone won't protect you from impact hazards.

Safety glasses. Safety glasses are designed to shield the eyes from a variety of impact hazards and provide frontal protection to the wearer's eyes. Side shields provide angular protection. Non-side shield glasses aren't acceptable eye protection for impact hazards.

Frames can be fitted with either corrective or Plano impact-resistant lenses. Plano lenses should be used by workers who don't require vision correction, and prescription corrective lenses should be used by workers who do.

Safety goggles. Safety goggles are designed to shield the eyes against flying fragments, objects, large chips and particles. Goggles fit the face and form a protective seal around the eyes. This prevents objects from entering under or around the goggles. The frame must fit properly to your face to form the correct seal.

Safety goggle lenses are designed and tested to resist moderate impact and may be removable or may incorporate prescription lenses mounted behind protective lenses if you need vision correction. Goggles are also available with different levels of ventilation.

Though your employer will provide you with suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) that complies with industry standards, different types may be available for different tasks. Before you begin a job that exposes you to impact hazards, take the time to consider which type of eye protection will provide your eyes with the best defense.

Care and maintenance. To make sure the form of eye protection you choose remains effective, clean and disinfect it regularly. To do this, disassemble the goggles or glasses, and thoroughly clean all parts with soap and warm water. Rinse all traces of soap and replace any defective parts with new ones. Swab the PPE thoroughly and immerse all parts for 10 minutes in a disinfectant solution. Remove the parts from the solution and let them air-dry in a clean place at room temperature or with heated air. Do not rinse after removing the parts from the solution because this will remove the germicidal residue that remains effective after drying. Replace the lenses if they become pitted or scratched.

Replace any headband if it becomes slack, worn out, soaked with sweat or twisted to the point where the elasticity is reduced.

To store eye protection properly, keep it in a clean, dust-proof container, such as a box, bag, plastic envelope or storage case.

Please do not post or share on any internet or intranet.

Employee safety update

First aid: Treating burn injuries

Burns fall into one of these three categories according to how severe they are:

- **First-degree burns** are the least serious. They usually make the skin red and can be quite painful, but they affect only the outside of the skin and usually don't have long-term effects.
- **Second-degree burns** go deeper. The skin gets very red and often blisters. These burns are also painful, though they don't usually become infected or scar as long as they're treated with the right first aid.
- **Third-degree burns** are very serious. They destroy the skin and leave it white or charred. These burns damage the tissue under the skin, including nerve endings, so they may not be painful. However, these burns are very dangerous and can become infected and lead to scarring.

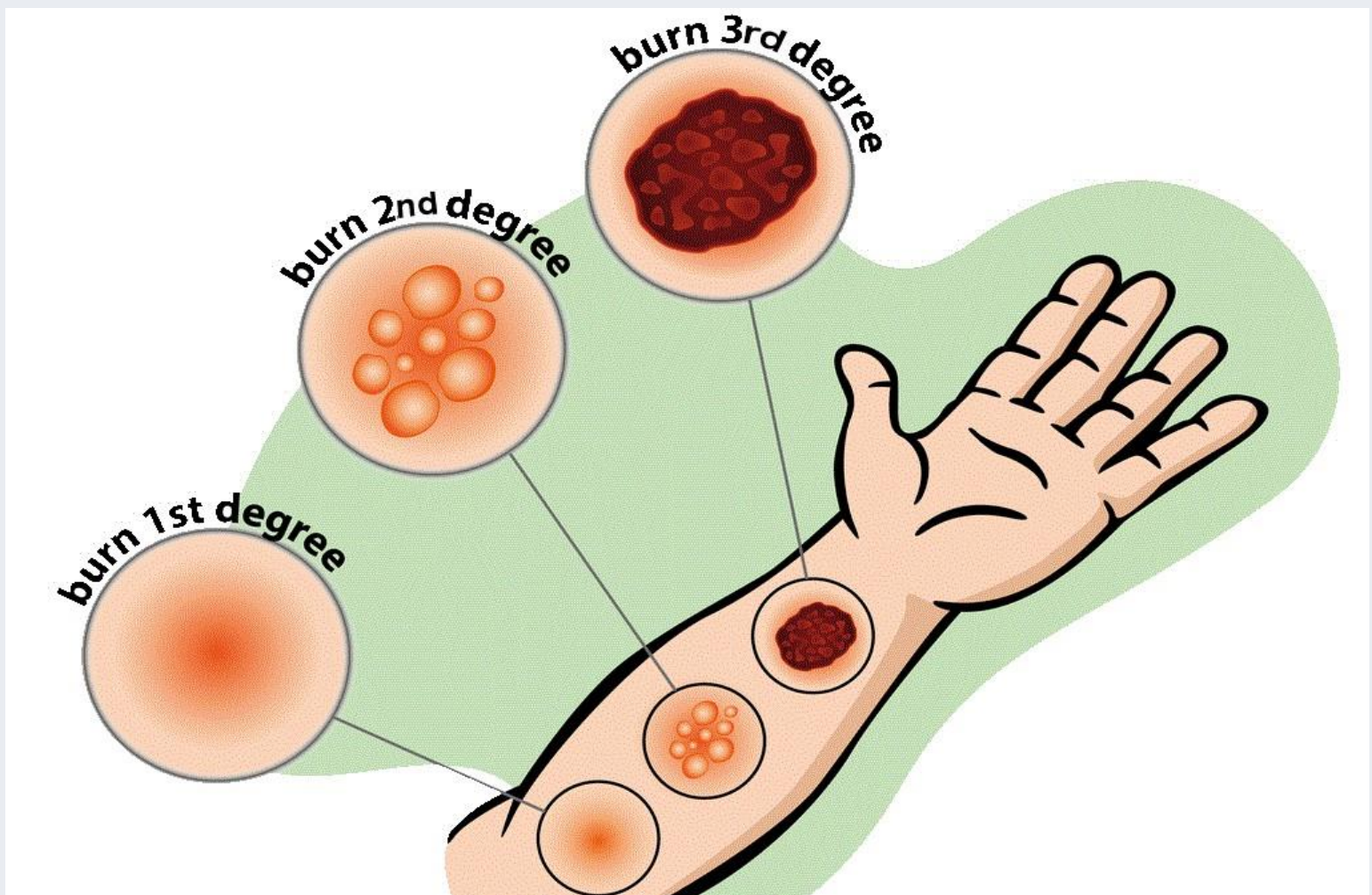
For first-degree and minor second-degree burns, place the burned area under cool running water until it's no longer painful or for 15 minutes. Cover it with a moist, sterile dressing. Don't

pack the burn in ice or rub burned skin, and don't break skin blisters. If a blister breaks on its own, clean the area with water, and apply an antibiotic ointment. Ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be used for pain relief if necessary. For chemical burns, always check the safety data sheet (SDS) for any specific first-aid instructions.

If a second-degree burn is larger than 2-3 inches or involves the feet, face, eyes, ears or groin or is located near a major joint, it's considered a major burn that requires medical attention.

For third-degree burns, call 911 immediately. While waiting for emergency medical services to arrive, make sure the victim is breathing. Because burned areas can swell quickly, remove jewelry, belts and other tight clothing items. However, do not try to remove any clothing or jewelry that's burned on, as this can cause more damage. Cover the burned area with a cool, moist bandage, and elevate the burned area. Keep the victim calm and comfortable until help arrives.

Please do not post or share on any internet or intranet.



Ergonomics for construction workers: Body posture and digging

Body posture

Many trades will perform installation and repair work; these are often performed at ceiling height, close to the ground or in tight spaces. The location where the work is performed can lead you to assume an awkward posture, such as crouching, kneeling, reaching or twisting. You should prefabricate parts and do all other work possible at a comfortable working height, like on a tabletop. However, during installation or repair work, if you find yourself maintaining an awkward posture, change positions frequently. Briefly standing from a crouched position or lowering your arms if they're outstretched can be beneficial.

Digging

When digging trenches or holes to bury electrical lines, you can easily injure your back from too much strain. Use mechanical equipment to dig, such as a backhoe, if you're certified to use it. If you must dig manually, never try to lift too much and be sure to select the right shovel for the job. Use a shovel with a round blade for digging in sand and dry dirt, a shovel with a square blade for digging in gravel or rocky soil, or a shovel with a rolled step for digging in hard dirt. The step will allow you to dig using your body weight when you step on it. To reduce bending, use long-handled tools that are appropriate for your height.

When manually digging, it's important to maintain a good body posture. To turn, move your feet instead of twisting your torso. You should also alternate shoveling motions between the left and right sides of your body and take short breaks or alternate with tasks that don't require manual digging.

Please do not post or share on any internet or intranet.





Chemical spotlight

Isoprene

Isoprene is a colorless liquid with a mild odor. It's used in the manufacture of synthetic and butyl rubbers, in elastomer plastics and as a chemical intermediate.

Isoprene isn't compatible with oxidizing agents, strong acids, reducing agents, oxygen, alkali metals, strong bases, ammonia, chlorinated solvents, alcohols, acid chlorides, acid anhydrides, amines, ethers and phenols.

Store isoprene in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from heat, and prevent electrostatic discharge. Sources of ignition are prohibited where the chemical is used, handled or stored. Metal containers involving the transfer of isoprene should be grounded and bonded. Only use non-sparking tools and equipment when handling the chemical. Isoprene should contain an inhibitor to prevent self-polymerization.

If isoprene is spilled or leaked, avoid breathing vapors, mist or gas and ensure adequate ventilation. Remove all

sources of ignition and evacuate personnel to safe areas. Use personal protective equipment (PPE), including goggles or safety glasses, gloves, flame-retardant protective clothing and respiratory protection.

Prevent further leakage or spillage if safe to do so, and do not let the product enter drains, sewers, underground or confined spaces, groundwater, waterways or discharge into the environment. Absorb liquids in vermiculate, dry sand, earth or a similar material, and deposit in sealed containers. Ventilate and wash the area after cleanup is complete. It may be necessary to contain and dispose of isoprene as a hazardous waste.

Contact the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and local environmental regulatory agency for specific recommendations.

Please do not post or share on any internet or intranet.