



The latest data available has more than 8.5 million people annually being treated in emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. Of those, there were over 450,000 workers injured that required multiple days off of work to recover. A fall can end in death or disability in a split second, but with a few simple precautions, you'll be sure to stay safe at work or home.

Make Fall Safety a Top Priority

It may come as a surprise that the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death is falls. In 2022, 46,653 people died in falls at home and at work, according to Injury Facts®. For working adults, depending on the industry, falls can be the leading cause of death.

Hazards in the Workplace

In 2022, 865 workers died in falls, and hundreds of thousands were injured badly enough to require days off of work. A worker doesn't have fall from a high level to suffer fatal injuries; 144 workers were killed in falls on the same level in 2022, according to *Injury Facts*. Construction workers are most at risk for fatal falls from height – more than seven times the rate of other industries – but falls can happen anywhere, even at a "desk job."

Falls are 100% Preventable

March is Ladder Safety Month. Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely.

- Discuss the task with coworkers and determine what safety equipment is needed
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather
- Use the correct tool for the job, and use it as intended

- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder
- Place the ladder on a solid surface and never lean it against an unstable surface
- A straight or extension ladder should be 1 foot away from the surface it rests on for every 4 feet of height and extend at least 3 feet over the top edge
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder, and have someone support the bottom
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before use

Make Fall Safety a Top Priority, National Safety Council, www.nsc.org/workplace/safety-topics/slips-trips-and-falls/slips-trips-and-falls-home. Accessed 20 Jan. 2025.

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