

# 5 RULES FOR LADDER SAFETY

This year more than 30,000 people will be disabled by falls involving ladders. Most of these accidents will occur because the victims don't know the ladder safety basics. The following five rules will greatly reduce the risk of a ladder related accident.

## **RULE 1**

### ***Select the right ladder for the job.***

Make certain the ladder is strong enough for its intended use.  
Choose a ladder that's long enough so you can work comfortably.  
Avoid metal ladders when there's a chance of contact with an electric current.

## **RULE 2**

### ***Inspect the ladder before you use it.***

Look for loose or damaged rungs, steps, rails, or braces.  
Repair or replace loose or missing screws, hinges, bolts and nuts, or other hardware.  
Make certain spreaders can be locked in place.  
Be sure straight ladders have safety feet.  
Never use a defective ladder.

## **RULE 3**

### ***Set up your ladder with care.***

If you must set up a ladder in a traffic area, use a barricade or guard to prevent unexpected collisions.  
Keep the area around the ladder base uncluttered.  
Avoid tilting by resting your ladder base on a solid, level surface.  
When you use a stepladder, make sure it's fully open and its spreader is locked.  
Position a straight ladder at a four-to-one ratio, that means the base of your ladder is one foot away from the wall or other vertical surface for every four feet of the ladder's length to the support point.  
When you use a ladder to climb onto a roof or platform, allow your ladder to extend at least three feet beyond the roof edge or other support point.  
To avoid shifting, tie down straight ladders as close to the support point as possible.  
Never lean a ladder against an unstable surface.

## **RULE 4**

### ***Climb and descend ladders cautiously.***

Face the ladder and hold on with both hands  
If you need tools, carry them in a tool belt or raise and lower them with a hand line.  
Don't take a chance on slipping, check ladder rungs and the bottoms of your shoes for slippery substances.

## **RULE 5**

### ***Use your common sense when you work on ladders***

Hold on with one hand.  
Never reach or lean too far to either side. Keep your belt buckle between the ladder rails.  
Don't climb higher than the second tread from the top on a stepladder or the third rung from the top on a straight ladder. ❀

# Effective Arson Prevention Guidelines

Each year there is an increasing number of reported cases of arson documented throughout New Jersey and across the country. There are some very basic steps that should be taken to minimize the risk of arson. Here are some guidelines to assist your district with developing an Arson Prevention Program.

## **Reduce Fire Setting Opportunity**

Remove garbage daily. Garbage has been used as an ignition source for arson fires. Cut back vegetation and clear away any debris around school buildings to reduce fire risk. Include fire safety education as part of your school's curriculum. Have your local fire department's public education officer talk to students about arson.

## **Prevent Unauthorized Building Entry**

Check all windows and doors to ensure that they close and lock securely. Keep them locked when school is out.

Limit roof and building access by storing ladders, equipment, and materials appropriately.

## **Reduce Potential for Fire Damage**

Check that automatic sprinkler systems are fully operational. Inspect water supply sources regularly. Your fire alarm system should be monitored to insure a proper response to activation. Train your staff on the use of the school's fire extinguishers, and ensure that the equipment is serviced regularly and in good working condition. Report all suspicious fires, no matter how small, to the local fire department.

## **Secure Your School Site**

Strongly consider installing surveillance cameras that deter all types of crime. Add or increase nightly security patrols on all school district property. Manage access to your site. Consider how responsible community members using your school after hours may reduce your vulnerability to arson. Discourage loiterers and intruders at your school. Be aware of possible warning signs. Vandalism and arson go hand in hand. Review your access control procedures during any construction activity.

Any effective arson program requires a commitment from all members of the school community. Involve the students, parents, teachers and administrators and you will be well on your way to establishing an effective program. If you would like further information or a copy of a checklist to help get you started, please contact your Loss Control representative.

The Loss Control Department is available to assist your district with all parts of your safety program and with specific guidelines to further your arson prevention program. You may contact Terry Barlow at 609-386-6060 extension 3033☎

*By Terry Barlow  
NJSBAIG Senior Loss Control Representative*

Claims Corner:

## *Sport Safety Checklist*

One of the sport safety experts that NJSBAIG uses regularly in defending sports-related injuries is Dr. Richard Borkowski. He has an impressive resume and has been instrumental in testifying on many cases going to trial.

In a handbook that Dr. Borkowski compiled entitled “**Coaching for Safety**”, he outlines a “Daily Dozen Safety Checklist” that every coach should consider prior to every practice and game. With his permission, these twelve (dozen) items are as follows:

1. **Check your practice plan.** Rest and water breaks?
2. **Check the rules.** Any changes in District or Statewide safety rules?
3. **Check the environment.** Is field or gym free of hazards? Have you walked and assessed the area?
4. **Check all equipment.** Is stationary equipment and play/practice equipment used for the day in good condition?
5. **Check the individual player’s equipment.** Does the protective equipment fit? Are your players in appropriate attire, especially footwear? Has jewelry been removed?
6. **Check the condition of the players.** Are all players physically ready to participate? Do you include a warm up, stretching and cool down in the practice plan?
7. **Check competition matching.** Have you avoided mismatching of players in regard to size, age and skill level?
8. **Check the supervision.** Are there an adequate number of qualified coaches? Are players always under the supervision of a coach? Do you know the best place to observe and scan the activity? Do you monitor the locker room?
9. **Check the medical and emergency plan.** Do you have an emergency plan in case of an injury? Have you reviewed it with all concerned? Do you have the students’ medical cards with you? Is there a game night security plan in place?
10. **Check the record keeping.** Have you collected physical examination forms, informed consent forms, emergency cards, attendance records, insurance forms and eligibility forms for any new players? Do you have a completed return to play form for any injured player?
11. **Check the athlete’s understanding of his/her responsibility.** Have you recently warned and informed your players about the potential risks of participating? Have you reminded them of their own role in injury prevention to themselves and others? Have you reminded the athletes about proper fundamentals, and to take practice seriously?
12. **Check that identified problems are addressed.** Have you contacted the Athletic Director with problems or concerns? Have you adjusted your practice or game to the facility that you are using?

Though seemingly obvious, a constant reminder of the daily dozen can’t help but reduce the number of injuries that plague our public school programs. ❁

*By William Miller, CPCU  
NJSBAIG Claims Supervisor*

# *WeTip Planning for Next School Year*

## **Attention SRO's**

WeTip is a free service available to all NJSBAIG members. The program consists of a 24 hour/day, 7 day/week phone line available to receive information regarding criminal activity in your community. The service is totally anonymous and provides rewards to tipsters for supplying information leading to the successful adjudication of criminals.

Now is the time to plan your District's WeTip program for the 2007/2008 year. The initial communication and on-going reminders of its existence are important to its success.

Anyone interested in more information may contact their Member Services Representative or Marty Kalbach at 609-386-6060 extension 3024. ☘