

Eye on SAFETY



Risk control news and safety tips for HISIG members

SAFETY ON LADDERS

Inappropriate selection and use of ladders and stepstools can be one of the biggest hazards found at a HISIG location. Many times we approach ladders in a careless manner by leaping onto them or by disregarding their placement or condition. In fact, falls from elevated surfaces are frequently listed as one of the top ten causes of accidents. Statistics show that about 273,000 workers were injured in the U.S. due to falls in 2003, many of them from ladders.

To help you avoid such hazards, HISIG recommends the following when choosing ladders for your workplace.

- Avoid lightweight and/or round stepstools as they can be unstable when used.
- Choose ladders with handrails that are equipped with non-skid shoes to avoid slipping.
- Ladders should be rated Class I or Class II for either commercial or industrial use, and meet the requirements of Cal/OSHA and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Follow all ladder safety rules

- Always inspect a ladder before use. If a ladder is damaged, take it out of service until properly repaired or destroyed.
- Place the ladder on even, solid surfaces such as the floor or ground. The distance from the base of the ladder to the wall should be equal to

one fourth the distance from the base to the point of the support.

- When using a stepladder ensure that it is fully extended and the spreaders are locked in place.
- Do not place a ladder in front of doors opening toward the ladder except when the door is blocked open, locked or guarded.
- Watch out for overhead hazards, especially electrical power lines or equipment.
- Never use a metal ladder around electrical lines or equipment.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending.
- Avoid overreaching, particularly if your work progressively gets farther away from your ladder.
- Members should try to abstain from using extension ladders as they represent a majority of the ladder falls. If an extension ladder must be used it should extend at least three feet above the elevated surface for which it provides access.
- Do not carry tools when climbing a ladder. Use a tool



belt, a tool bag and rope, or have someone hand tools to you.

- Try to maintain three points of contact on a ladder when possible (two hands and one foot, two feet and one hand).
- Always store your ladders where they will not become hazards or become damaged.

Ladders pose special safety hazards, so it's important that we be familiar with the risks and safety rules.

For more information on types and uses of ladders and stepstools, contact Tim or Michelle at HISIG Risk Control 818-449-9335.



USING YOUR INJURY & ILLNESS PREVENTION PLAN

HISIG's Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP) provides guidelines to help ensure your employees enjoy a safe and healthy place to work. Here are three tips on making your IIPP more unique to your company's needs.

Read it – Read the plan to make sure you understand and agree with its guidelines. While certain aspects of the plan are necessary for compliance reasons, you should note that this is *your* safety program and that it can be tailored to your needs and wants. Please inform HISIG's Risk Control Department of any changes you would like to make to ensure compliance with guidelines set forth by CalOSHA.

Personalize it – Certain sections of your safety plan require you to identify personnel, locate MSDSs, emergency phone numbers, etc. This is information that your employees have a need, and a right, to know.

Distribute it – Your safety plan can't be effective or truly yours if no one knows about it. Make copies for various locations, place it on your computer system, and announce its existence at the next store-wide meeting.

For more information on how to put your IIPP to work, please contact Tim or Michelle at HISIG Risk Control at 818-449-9335.



A WORD FROM THE BOARD

The HISIG board, and myself as President Chair, encourage all members to help the HISIG program grow by spreading the word to your fellow home improvement professionals about the opportunities presented by the HISIG Self Insurance Workers Comp Program.

The current program continues to grow in profitability as we move into year three from our 2005 start date. Current minimum contributions are \$7,500 annually and the group will qualify any of the following home improvement classes of business: hardware stores; paint and wallpaper stores; retail nurseries; retail lumberyards; retail flooring stores; lawn and garden stores; retail tool stores and home centers. If you have a contact who has a mixed classification, they must have at least 51% retail sales in any of the above retail classes listed.

We thank our current members for their continued support and look forward to everybody's help in getting the word out to qualified retailers in your communities.

If you have any questions about HISIG, please contact our marketing representative Rusty Russell at Poms & Associates Ins. Brokers, Inc. at 1-800-578-8802.

I look forward to continued success as we move forward.

Garth Smith

President Chair

HISIG MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Four Seasons Supply Center

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HISIG extends a warm welcome to its newest member, Four Season's Supply Center of Alturas, CA.

Four Seasons joined us on October 1, 2007, and is our farthest north member, about 25 miles from the Oregon border!

Welcome to the group!