



## 2015 Safety Information Bulletin

Thanks for volunteering your services for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. Before you report to the job site, please take a few minutes and review the very important information in this bulletin.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Registration and Liability Waiver**

[If you have already completed registration or you have a permanent Habitat Volunteer ID Card with barcode you can skip this section.]

Before coming to the job site, you must go to a website and fill out a liability waiver and obtain a barcode for check-in at the job site. Attendance is logged into a computer at the job site every day using the barcode.

Go to: <https://volunteering.tchabitat.org/VMSWeb/index.php>

Fill in the requested information and click on "Register". This should return a page with your name and a bar code. Save the page on your computer and then print it. Bring the printed copy with the barcode to the job site each day.

If you do not have internet access, this process can be completed when you arrive at the job site on the first day.

### **WHAT'S NEW FOR 2015**

Twin City Habitat implemented several major changes in safety on the job-site a few years ago. These new safety practices continue for the 2015 construction season and must be followed by all Habitat Staff and volunteers. These procedures are all necessary to both improve safety and assure compliance with regulations. Residential construction safety has been targeted for increased emphasis in recent years by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and OSHA inspections have taken place at Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity job sites. The consequences of violations of OSHA safety standards could be significant fines levied on Habitat for Humanity even if the violations are committed by a volunteer.

Special areas of emphasis on our job sites this year will include proper use of ladders, fall protection for persons working in elevated locations, proper use of tools and equipment, trips and falls, and the use of all required personal protective equipment (PPE), especially eye protection. Each of these topics is covered in the information below.

#### **Safety Training**

To be certain that all volunteers fully understand the safety requirements of the work they will be performing, a job safety analysis related to the work to be done each day will be performed and safety training will be provided by Habitat Staff at the start of each shift. Persons arriving late and/or missing the safety training may not be permitted to work that day depending on the topic and any previous training received. Persons habitually failing to follow safety rules may be barred from the job site.

# GENERAL CONSTRUCTION SAFETY REMINDERS

## Tetanus Shot

It is recommended that you make sure that your tetanus shot is up-to-date. Although a current tetanus shot is not required to participate in project work, it is an excellent precaution when doing construction related activities.

## Work Attire

Clothing should fit comfortably but should not be baggy (long sleeves should be buttoned). Avoid wearing gloves when working with power tools. Gloves can easily become tangled in or pulled into the tool causing serious injury.

## Personal Protective Equipment

Residential construction work is covered by OSHA workplace regulations just like many other businesses. The following items of personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required on the job site depending on the type of work activity taking place. You may wish to bring your own PPE if you have it, however, most required PPE (other than footwear) is available at the job site.



- Hard hat (when overhead work is ongoing)
- Eye protection (safety glasses or goggles)
- High visibility work vest (during all exterior and framing work)
- Sturdy shoes (steel toes preferred)
- Hearing protection (for loud work activities)



## Weather Conditions

Be mindful of the weather conditions.

- If you are working in direct sun, wear sun block (SPF-30 or higher recommended).
- Drink plenty of fluids in hot weather.
- Stop outside work immediately and seek shelter if lightning is observed or thunder is heard. Shut down generators and do not resume work until advised by Habitat Staff or your group's On Site Coordinator (OSC).
- Don't use power tools or cords if it is raining or if the work area is wet or has accumulated standing water.
- If you begin to feel tired or weak, take a break. Move to the shade if it's hot. Drink fluids and grab a snack. Don't return to work until you are feeling better.

## Work Location Assessment

Before working in any area, please survey the space around you.

- Look around your feet and overhead for obstacles.
- Organize the workspace within your reach.
- Be especially careful when carrying long objects.
- Watch for excavations, openings, edges or slabs and slippery conditions.
- Always move only in the direction you are looking. Avoid walking backwards or to the side.
- Be aware of persons and work taking place around you.
- Be especially careful for forklifts and other vehicles on the job site.
- Never walk under or near loads being lifted overhead by a forklift or crane.

## **Housekeeping**

A clean job site is essential to work place safety.

- Please put trash in dumpsters and scrap lumber where it belongs.
- If nails are protruding from scrap lumber, extract them (don't just bend them over).
- Keep track of your tools.
- If you see something out of place, please pick it up and put it in its proper spot to help keep the work site organized.
- Clean up your work area and the rest of the job site at the end of each work day.

## **Power Tools and Cords**

When operating power tools, know the correct procedures. If you are uncertain, ask your Crew Leader or Habitat Staff for training. Before operating tools, inspect the cords, plugs and blades/bits. If the blade or bit needs to be replaced, disconnect the tool from the power source. Support the material being cut properly and never reach under the material while it is being cut. Wear eye and hearing protection. Inspect extension cords before use as well. If cord insulation is cut or frayed or if the plug is loose or is missing the ground prong, tag the cord for repair and return it to the tool area. State Law and Habitat work rules prohibit anyone under the age of 18 from using power tools.

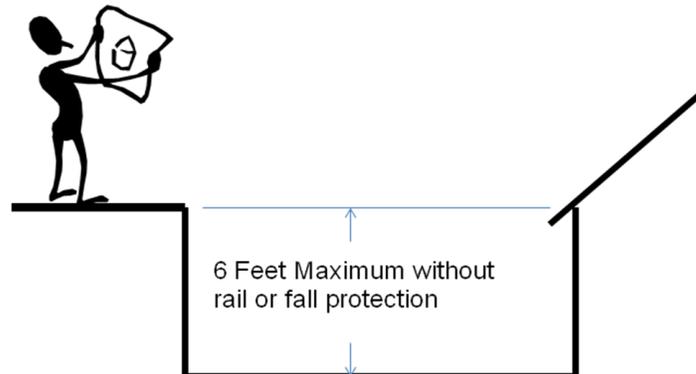
## **Lifting and Carrying**

When lifting, stand close to the load, bend knees, grasp firmly, and then lift by straightening your legs. Keep your body vertical. Be sure to get help with heavy or long loads.

## **Fall Protection and Leading Edge Work**

Falls are one of the most common causes of serious injury at construction sites.

A major change in safety rules recently implemented involves an increased emphasis on fall protection at all Habitat job sites. Options that are employed to reduce the risk of falls from elevated locations include railings, scaffolding, harnesses.



Basically, any work done more than 6 feet above the next lower level will require implementation of fall protection precautions. This includes work on roofs as well as on other working surfaces such as installing sheathing for floors or working in an elevated cage attached to a forklift.

Frequently, persons performing "lead edge" work or other elevated work activities not done directly from ladders or scaffolding will be required to wear a harness that is attached to a firm anchor point and that will limit the distance of a fall such as to prevent injury. Set-up of the fall protection systems must be done only under the supervision of trained and qualified personnel. Habitat Staff at your job site have received this required training. Volunteers performing these kinds of tasks will receive special training from Habitat Staff prior to being allowed access to the work locations.

Here are some examples taken from Minnesota OSHA citation files of things you don't want to be doing:



## Ladders

Always inspect the ladder before use. If there is damage, broken parts or loose / missing feet, tag the ladder as "UNSAFE" and return it to the tool area.

### **A-Frame Ladders (Step Ladders)**



- A-Frame ladders should only be used in the fully open position.
- All four legs should be solidly in contact with the floor or ground. If ground is uneven, remove high spots or provide solid cribbing under ladder legs.
- Never allow more than one person on the ladder unless it is specifically designed for two-person use.

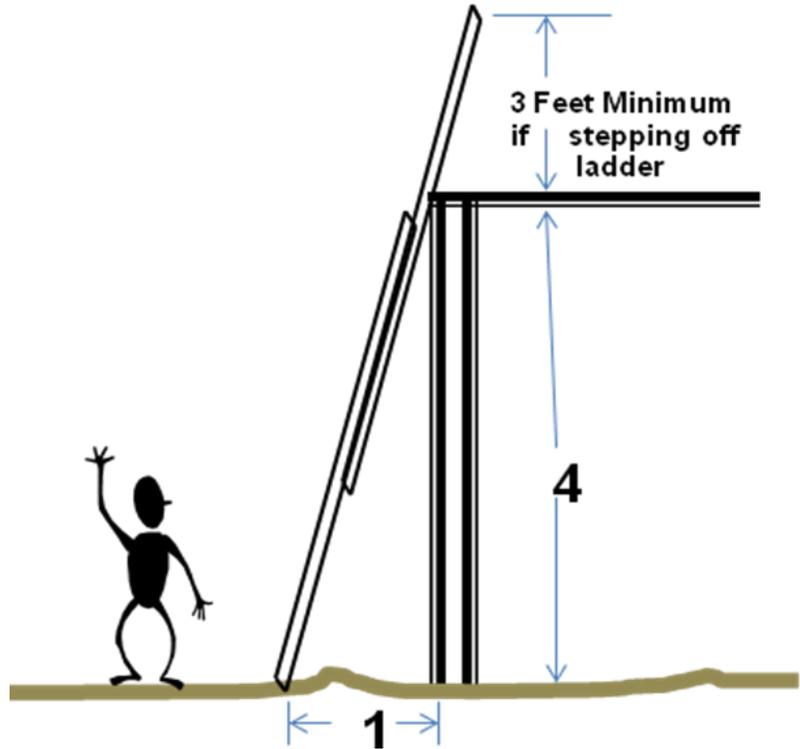


- Never stand on the top step or the top platform of an A-Frame ladder.



## Extension Ladders

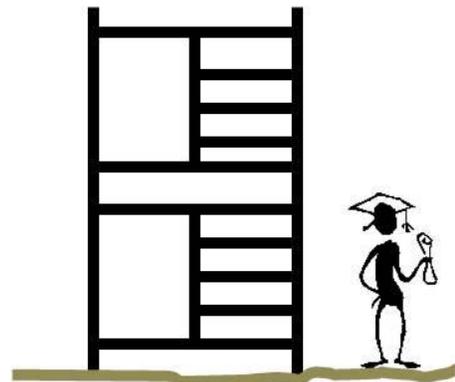
- Observe the 4:1 ratio when setting the ladder. (One foot back for every four feet in height.)
- Make sure that *both* feet of the ladder are solidly in contact with the ground.
- Have someone block / steady the ladder when you are climbing.
- If the ladder is being used for access to an elevated surface, the top of the ladder must extend a minimum of 3 feet above the exit surface. Tie off the top of the ladder to solid structure if possible.
- Climb and work from the ladder always keeping at least three points of contact with your body. (Two feet and one hand, two hands and one foot, etc.)



## Scaffolding

Always consult with your Crew Leader, Group OSC, or Habitat Staff before erecting, moving or modifying any scaffolding structure.

- All scaffolding must be erected under the supervision of a “Qualified Person”. All Habitat Site Supervisors are trained in this capacity.
- Scaffolding must be erected plumb and level.
- All working surfaces must be fully planked .
- Scaffolding must be positioned within 14” of the building surface.
- Elevation differences must not exceed 24” at any point where access is intended from one level to the next (i.e.: scaffold to scaffold, window to scaffold, etc.)
- Tie-offs to the building, railings and other features are required as determined by the “Qualified Person” supervising the scaffold erection.
- Railings or suitable cross bracing are required for all working levels.



## **Pneumatic Tools**

Some work activities may involve the use of a pneumatic nail gun or stapler. These types of tools present special hazards including:

- Potential for injury to eyes, hands and fingers.
- Splinters or blow out of fragments from the material being fastened.
- Puncturing the back of the material leaving exposed sharp points.
- Fire fasteners completely through the material and striking workers behind the nailing surface.
- Contact hazards such as nails striking cords or electric wires.

Following are some tips on safe use of pneumatic tools:

- Know how to use the tool. If in doubt contact your Crew Leader or Habitat Staff for training.
- All persons working in the area where pneumatic tools are in use must wear safety glasses with side shields or safety goggles.
- Never defeat or modify safety features.
- If the tool is defective, tag it as UNSAFE and return it to the tool area.
- Keep fingers away from the trigger when not driving fasteners.
- Avoid line-of-fire hazards. Never point the tool at anyone or use the tool in a location where persons are located in the area toward which the fasteners will be driven.
- Disconnect the tool from the air line to perform adjustments or maintenance or to clear jams.

## **Respiratory Protection**

Some work at the job site may require the use of a particulate respirator (dust mask). When required, appropriate respirators will be provided by Habitat. Persons with certain types of heart or lung disease or other medical issues should not use respirators. If you have a health concern related to the use of respirators speak to your group's OSC or Habitat Staff for job reassignment. Examples of work that may require use of a respirator include:

- Handling fiberglass or blown-in insulation materials
- Cutting treated ("green") lumber
- Sanding or other work that generates fine dust

## **Injuries and First Aid**

- Habitat Site Supervisors, Construction Interns and AmeriCorps personnel are trained in first aid. First aid boxes can typically be found in the break area or in the tool area.
- Report all injuries to your Crew Leader. Any injuries beyond minor first aid must also be reported to Habitat Staff.
- In the event of a serious injury, work on the job site may be stopped and all personnel asked to assemble in the break area or other designated location until the emergency has been dealt with. Please stay clear of the area of the emergency and allow Habitat Staff and emergency responders to carry out the required actions.

## **Environmental**

Containment of silt and debris carried in rain water runoff must be controlled at all construction sites in compliance with Minnesota environmental regulations. Silt fences and booms must be kept in position to control rainwater run-off from the construction site. If these booms or fences must be temporarily moved to allow vehicle access to the construction site or on-site parking areas or because of other work activities, they must be replaced before the end of the work day.

Thanks for taking the time to review this important safety information. It is our goal to keep your work with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity accident and injury free. With everyone's cooperation and attention to detail we can make this happen!