

# How to Prevent Home Accidents

BY ARTHUR A. BURROUGHS

WHILE SAVING homeowners a lot of cash, the national "do-it-yourself" craze also costs them a lot of needless misery. A recent survey by the Institute for Safer Living revealed that more than 600,000 Americans suffer disabling injuries every year doing odd jobs around home.

The survey found, for instance, that each year 115,000 of us are injured doing carpentry repair; 95,000 are hurt replacing broken windows; and 76,000 giving the house a coat of paint.

About 300,000 home accidents involve ladders, so consider these suggestions:

1. Check your ladder, making sure its rungs are strong and dry.
2. Place ladder so its feet rest on a firm, level surface. The bottom can be made secure by driving a stake into the ground between the ladder and the building, tying the feet of the ladder to the stake.
3. When leaning a straight ladder against a wall, make sure its feet rest away from the wall at a distance about one-fourth the ladder's height.
4. Open a stepladder fully so the side braces latch.
5. Climb the ladder slowly and steadily. Shifting or swaying indicates it is placed improperly.
6. Work only within arm's length of the ladder without bending the body or assuming any but a normal standing position.
7. Do not carry tools up a ladder unless they fit in a pocket.

Power and hand tools also are a threat to the average do-it-yourselfer, accounting for some 252,000 injuries a year. When buying a power tool, be sure it has the latest safety guards and bears the seal of the Underwriters' Laboratories.

Here are some other ways to help insure your family's safety:

1. Know the correct safe practices for using a new power unit. Follow instructions to the letter.
2. Don't let other members of the family

operate a tool until they are thoroughly familiar with it.

3. Have workshop machinery supplied with electricity through a separate enclosed switch which can be locked open when not in use.

4. Enclose all moving wheels and belts, including saw blades.

5. Anchor stationary power tools to the floor or bench so they can't overturn or shift position.

6. Give power units proper care, keeping them dry and clean. Never use a machine that isn't working properly.

7. Wear goggles when using saws, drills, or any device that may throw off dangerous flying particles.

Of course, thousands of accidents befall the home craftsman who uses neither power tools nor ladders. Here are a few hints on how to avoid other mishaps:

1. Don't use a razor blade when cutting wallpaper. Use scissors, wheel cutter, or wallpaper knife.
2. Have a fire extinguisher ready when using a blowtorch.
3. Wear goggles when there is danger of flying particles.
4. If an electric fuse blows out, find out which appliance caused the trouble and have it fixed.
5. Don't replace a defective fuse until you shut off the house current by operating the main switch.
6. When connecting any electrically driven equipment, make sure wiring is heavy enough to prevent overload.

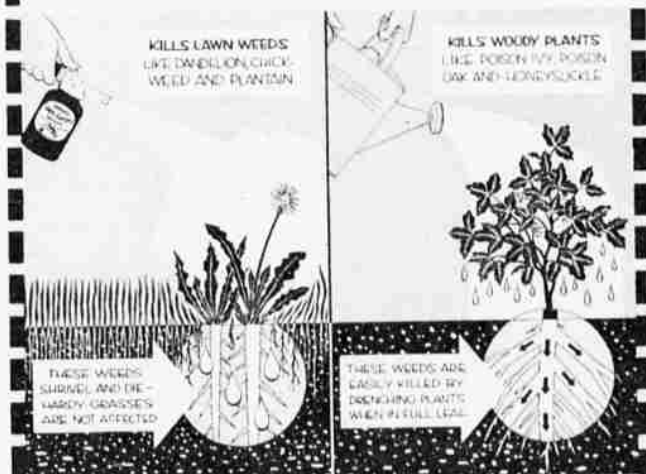
First-aid equipment is a must in every workshop. Keep your medical kit well supplied and have a phone number posted so you can get emergency medical treatment if necessary.

Afterward, try to find out what went wrong. Remember that accidents don't just happen—they are caused. And learning the cause will help prevent its happening again.

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