Ladder Safety – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Primary hazards and types of injuries associated with ladder use in landscaping.

Hazards and Types of Injuries

1. **Falls from Height**
    - **Improper Ladder Use:** Many injuries occur due to improper ladder use, such as using the wrong type of ladder, not securing the ladder properly, or overreaching while on the ladder.
    - **Unstable Surfaces:** Placing ladders on uneven or unstable surfaces increases the risk of falls.
1. **Structural Failure**
    - **Damaged Equipment:** Using damaged ladders can lead to structural failure.
    - **Overloading:** Exceeding the ladder’s weight capacity leads to structural failure.
1. **Electrical Hazards**
    - **Contact with Power Lines:** Aluminum ladders, in particular, can conduct electricity, posing a significant hazard if they come into contact with live wires.
1. **Musculoskeletal Injuries**
    - **Repetitive Strain:** Climbing and descending ladders can lead to repetitive strain injuries.
    - **Carrying Heavy Loads:** Carrying tools or materials while climbing ladders can strain muscles.

1. **Slip and Fall Hazards**
    - **Wet or Icy Rungs:** Ladders in wet or icy conditions can become slippery, increasing the risk of slipping and falling.

STATS

- Each year, there are more than 164,000 emergency room-treated injuries and approximately 300 deaths caused by falls from ladders in the USA.
- Falls from ladders account for about 20% of all fall injuries, making them a major contributor to fall-related incidents in various industries, including landscaping.
- Among landscape workers, an estimated 81% of fall injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms involve a ladder. Additionally, nearly two-fifths of work-related fatal falls involve falls from roofs or ladders.
- In Ontario Canada alone, approximately 8,300 individuals sought emergency medical care following ladder falls in one year, with 1,231 requiring overnight hospitalization due to their injuries.
- Ladders are involved in about 2% of all occupational accidents in industrialized countries, indicating that approximately one in every 2000 workers will experience a serious injury related to ladder use each year.