

THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE DIGEST

Weekly Wellness & Safety Tips from Work Right NW



YOU BETTER WATCH OUT

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During prime holiday season, we all want to make sure our holiday decorations are a perfect 10/10. If it's because we want to impress our neighbors, get in the holiday spirit, or need to do our best Clark Griswold impersonation, holiday decorations are a must! That being said, the installation and inevitable take down of these decorations can be difficult at times. To stay safe this holiday season, **PREPARED** isn't just for the industrial athlete. This Injury Prevention Specialist wants to ensure all **[E]** Evaluate their equipment for the job, remember to keep their **[E]** Elbows in and thumbs up when reaching, and **[R]** Review their hazards!

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS

Having exterior decorations like lights is a great way to decorate your house. Unfortunately, it's not as easy as just plugging them in or pulling them down. Setting up exterior decorations typically involves ladders or step stools. One crucial thing we need to do is evaluate our equipment for the job to make sure we're using safe equipment. When grabbing the ladder out of the garage (that may or may not have been sitting there since last winter), or storing it after use, we should inspect it to ensure it's safe to use. Are there any broken or weak parts? Is it suitable to hold our weight? Structural damage only heightens risk for injury. After inspection and during use, we should be mindful to have proper lifting posture when moving a ladder around. Engage your core and hinge at the hips when lifting.

SHEDDING LIGHT ON EXTERIOR ILLUMINATION


When installing or taking down lights and decorations, it's important to keep proper posture and technique in mind. When you're up on the recently inspected and safe ladder, you're going to have to do quite a bit of reaching out in front of you or to the side to install the decor. When doing so, it will be important to [keep your elbows in and thumbs up](#). Your shoulders will thank you.

While working through installation or tear down, understand that working fast may be a time saver, but can be harmful! Instead of reaching all the way across the house or trying to hang off your gutters to install that last light, walk down the ladder and move it over. It's an easy way to stay injury-free during the holidays. *Slow is smooth, smooth is fast!*

UP ON THE ROOFTOP

We've evaluated our equipment and utilized proper posture and technique, but hazards still remain! The winter season presents numerous hazards for exterior holiday decorating and we should keep an eye out for a few specific ones.

- First, ice! When moving the ladder around or stepping from rung to rung, keep a lookout for any ice that may be forming.
- Watch for any falling snow coming from the roof or gutters. If snow is piling up, jostling from nailing or stapling can send snow falling, causing us to lose our balance or worse.
- Lastly, wearing proper attire during decorating is wise! We might think (or wish) this process will take 5 minutes, but in reality, that's not going to happen. So put on your snow pants, winter jacket, warm hat and gloves, and prevent hypothermia and frustration!

Happy Holidays to all from Work Right NW! 



Steve Limbrunner, ATC || Steve is a Certified Athletic Trainer in Normal, IL and is Work Right's resident foodie chef. He has worked in youth sports, high school, college, clinic settings and now the industrial setting. He is passionate about motivating people to take care of themselves through preventative exercise. When he's not working, he enjoys working out, cooking, and golfing.

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

