



KEEP SAFE

A Monthly Publication for Texas Electric Cooperatives

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Falls from vehicles.....

Serious injury has become an all-too-frequent result when our employees fall from the cab or bed of a truck. Many mishaps occur in the simple process of getting in and out of the trucks.

Whenever mounting or climbing on a vehicle, have a good hand-hold before stepping up. Pulling yourself up reduces the force between your shoe and the step, and reduces the danger of a slip. As with a ladder, the foot should be placed on the step or rung just in front of your heel, under the arch. Always face the vehicle when mounting and dismounting. When stepping down backward, one steps down on the ball of the foot; when stepping down forward, one lands on the heel, thus increasing the chances of falling, twisting an ankle or knee or suffering some other injury.

Practice the “Three-Point System.” This system can significantly reduce the chances of injuring yourself through a slip or fall while entering or exiting a vehicle. The Three-Point System means that three of your four limbs are in contact with the vehicle at all times, either one hand and two feet, or two hands and one foot. Only one limb is in motion at any one time.

One more tip that will save you from many sprains or worse: When getting off the bed of a truck or any similar level, step down backward, never “jump” or “fall” down forward.



Causes of fall injuries

Fall injuries commonly occur when workers slip, misstep, jump, trip, lose their balance, or otherwise lose their footing due to:

- ✓ Entering or exiting vehicle cabs.
- ✓ Climbing into or out of bucket lifts, or onto and off trucks, backhoes, and other vehicles and equipment.
- ✓ Loading / unloading materials from the bed or other parts of the vehicle or equipment.

Ways to prevent falls

- ✓ When entering or exiting the cab of a vehicle, use the Three-Point Rule.
- ✓ Always use the mounting handles and the stepping surfaces designed for the purpose of entering and exiting.
- ✓ Make sure your foot is securely planted on the step before moving.
- ✓ Replace any defective or missing steps.
- ✓ Make sure the stepping surfaces and your shoes are free of mud, ice and oil. Wear slip-resistant shoes to help with traction.
- ✓ Make sure areas on the ground and on the vehicle where you are stepping are clear of potential tripping hazards, such as air hoses and tools.
- ✓ Do not jump off vehicles.
- ✓ When working close to the edge of either the vehicle’s bed or elsewhere on the vehicle, always face toward the edge to keep from falling backwards.

Learning how to fall

Naturally, the goal is not to slip, trip and fall, but the possibility still exists. The following procedures will help lessen the possibility of serious injury:

- ✓ Tuck your chin in, turn your head, and throw an arm up. It is better to land on your arm than on your head.
- ✓ While falling, twist or roll your body to the side. It is better to land on your buttocks and side than on your back.
- ✓ Keep your wrists, elbows and knees bent. Do not try to break the fall with your hands or elbows. When falling the objective is to have as many square inches of your body contact the surface as possible, thus, spreading out the impact of the fall.

Preventing high blood pressure could save millions of lives

More Americans are aware of the link between high blood pressure and other health problems than in the past, yet the number of people in the United States with high blood pressure has actually increased during the past decade. This news is significant because high blood pressure leads to 60 percent of the heart attacks, 77 percent of the strokes and 74 percent of all cases of heart failure in the United States each year.

A blood pressure reading of 140/90 mmHg or higher is considered high. Optimal blood pressure is less than 120/80 mmHg.

Anyone can develop high blood pressure. However, risk factors include being overweight or obese, being physically inactive, high salt and sodium intake, excessive alcohol consumption and diabetes.

High blood pressure can be prevented, and it can be controlled. Here are some tips:

- ✓ Lose weight if needed, and maintain a healthy weight.
- ✓ If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.
- ✓ Be physically active. Try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate-level activity each day.
- ✓ Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy foods. Also, limit saturated fat, cholesterol and salt intake.
- ✓ Ask your health-care professional what your blood pressure numbers are and what they mean.
- ✓ Quit smoking.
- ✓ Control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.
- ✓ Take your blood pressure medication as prescribed.

For additional information, visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

- Source: NAPSI

Navigate snowy roads safely

Driving poses all types of challenges, but none is more daunting than the threat of navigating through snow. The Ohio Department of Transportation recommends you review these safety tips when preparing to travel in snow:

- ❖ Leave early, and expect any trip to take twice as long as normal.
- ❖ Plan your route to avoid steep upgrades and lightly-traveled roads where deep drifts have a chance to form.
- ❖ Slow down. Slick pavement means reduced traction and loss of control.
- ❖ Increase your following distance. It can take from three to 10 times farther to stop on winter-slick pavement than on dry roads.
- ❖ Apply strong pressure to your brakes if you're driving a vehicle with anti-lock brakes. If your car doesn't have anti-lock brakes, stop gradually by pumping your brakes.
- ❖ Stay off the road when traveler's warnings are issued. If you're at work and road conditions suddenly become impassable, stay where you are.
- ❖ Winterize your car before the snow starts to fly.

— Today's Supervisor
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Upcoming Loss Control Schools

Transformer School (Fredericksburg)	January 15 – 18
Regulator, Recloser, Capacitor School (Livingston)	January 29 – February 1
Troubleshooting School (Merkel)	February 5 – 8
Regulator, Recloser, Capacitor School (Gonzales)	February 19 – 22
Advanced Pole Climbing School (Gonzales)	March 4 - 7
Underground School (Quitman)	March 24 - 28
Basic Pole Climbing School (Quitman)	March 25 - 28

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