

As I indicated in my first safety column, my goal is to provide you with safety tips that will not only keep workers working safely but keep jobs moving as optimally as possible. No supervisor wants a job held up because of an accident or safety infraction. My goal is to keep that from happening.

Did you know over 40% of all falls on a construction site are off ladders, it only makes sense to include ladder safety while speaking to the proper selection, inspection and use of a personal fall arrest system. My October and November's Safety Tip Column is dedicated to ladder safety. For help with this endeavor I've recruited Tom Harvick from H3 Marketing, who is the representative for Little Giant Safety Ladder.

Tom Harvick is a ladder expert who I've had the pleasure of working with on several occasions and can attest to his expertise, professionalism and crowd charisma as he engages workers on the finer, but important points of ladder safety. On my jobsite fall protection awareness demo's, I try to include Tom or his brother Brian, who is also a ladder expert and Little Giant representative, as much as possible.

I asked Tom Harvick his Top 5 ladder safety tips in order of importance. I've included the two most important below (with the other 3 in next month's issue). Tom also noted his most frequently encountered misuse of ladders while on today's construction site. Failure to properly use and maintain ladders can really impact your job's progress.

Below is the first half of Tom's reply:

1. Using Ladders that are Unfit for Duty.

"On too many job sites, I see ladders in use that are excessively faded, cracked, bent, broken, missing parts, labels etc. Ladders should be inspected by a Qualified Person for visible defects frequently and after any occurrence which could affect their safe use. It is also recommended that users inspect their ladders before use every day to make sure they are climbing on a safe piece of equipment. **SAFE CLIMBING AND CONSCIENTIOUS WORK PRACTICES ARE MEANINGLESS IF THE EQUIPMENT YOU ARE DEPENDING ON COLLAPSES UNDERNEATH YOU!"**

2. Using the Wrong Ladders for the JOB.

"It is very disturbing to see A-frame ladders collapsed and leaned up against walls for climbing or extension ladders being propped up manually or by insufficient means in order to conduct work overhead. Straight and Extension ladders should to be used for accessing other levels while self-supporting A-frames should be used for overhead work. I also see ladders that are too short for the job stacked up on pallets, tied together, propped up in the bed of a pickup truck, and worse. The only answer for having the wrong type or height of ladder is simple: **JUST GET THE RIGHT LADDER FOR THE JOB!"**

Today, there are many different types of ladders for many different purposes. There are also ladders that now are manufactured with various features that can enable the ladder to be used for

many different applications. These ladders can keep your workers using the right ladder for the job without having to stop and look around for the right ladder or jury-rig a ladder in a dangerous way. Using the right ladder for the right purpose is essential for today's construction worker.