



Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Making Autumn Chores Safe



The autumn season brings colorful leaves, cooler temperatures and earlier sunsets. It also brings clean-up, fix-up and put-away activities for the homeowner. **DO NOT OVER DO IT.**

Many homeowners, to get the job done, keep going beyond their energy level. That is when accidents are likely to occur. Fatigue can be reduced by alternating heavy and light work, wearing appropriate shoes and clothing, getting help when moving heavy articles, bending the knees when lifting and taking frequent breaks.

Dress properly for outdoor autumn activities and be prepared for sudden weather changes. Protect yourself against becoming wet or chilled.

FALLING LEAVES

Loose clothing and jewelry should not be worn when operating leaf blowers or other machinery. Wear the proper shoes and safety goggles and never blow debris in the direction of bystanders.

Check with your local fire ordinance to find out if burning is permitted. Trash and leaf fires should always be kept away from building and other combustible materials. Never let children play near fire.

Do not allow leaves to gather on walks, driveways or patios. If they become wet the leaves can become a slipping hazard.

LADDERS

Use the proper ladder for the job. Place ladders on firm, level, non-slippery surfaces.

Never carry tools in your hand while climbing a ladder. Use a tool belt or hoist tools with a rope.

When using a rung ladder outdoors for changing screens or painting, be sure that it is firmly planted. Place the bottom of the ladder about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the length of the ladder away from the wall.

If the ground is soft, brace a board under the feet to keep it from sagging.

Never reach too far to either side. Maintain your belt buckle, or the spot where it would be, between the ladder rails.

Keep ladders in good repair. Never paint a wooden ladder nor buy one that has been painted. Paint hides flaws and it is difficult to see if wood is in good condition.

STORAGE/MAINTENANCE

Empty your barbecue grill of all charcoal and dispose of the coals in a metal container. Clean all grease and deposits off the grill and store it in a dry place to keep it from rusting. Store unused charcoal and lighter fluid in a dry place, preferably in a locked outdoor shed.

Shut off the main valve to your portable gas barbecue tank. Then disconnect the hose from that tank and detach the gas tank from the grill. Clean any grease or deposit from the unit.

Drain the gasoline tank on your power mower and wipe up all spills. Store the mower and let it run until it is out of fuel. Clean the mower thoroughly and store in a dry place.

Store gasoline outside of the house and in a locked shed or an unattached garage.

Pegs, stakes and nets from lawn games should be pulled up and stored to prevent tripping. Also, remember to take down the outdoor clothesline.

Unhook the garden hose from the faucet connection. This prevents freezing of the water line where it passes through the wall of the house. Coil up the hose and store it.

Pesticides should be in their original, labeled containers. They should be kept in a locked storage area out of the way of children or pets.

LIFTING

Bend at the knees, not at the back, when lifting. Substitute leg and shoulder muscles for back muscles and apply the lift gradually. Grip the load near the center of its weight.

Get help when moving heavy objects or better yet, use a cart or wheelbarrow. Make a skid out of sheet plastic or canvas to drag loads across the lawn.