

# Quarterly express

A PUBLICATION OF THE BUILDERS GROUP

FALL 2011

Protecting our Members  
with Safety Awareness



## HOW TO PREVENT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING



*plus*

**HIRING PRACTICES**  
The Importance of  
Pre-Hire Screening

**FALL PROTECTION  
QUIZ** You Could Win  
Free Equipment!



**BUILT BY THE INDUSTRY  
FOR THE INDUSTRY**

# Quarterly express

The QUARTERLY EXPRESS is published quarterly by The Builders Group of Minnesota as a free service provided for our Members and contracted agents.

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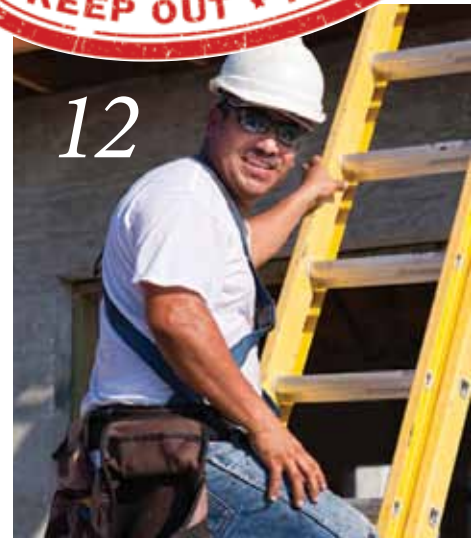


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**You Could Win FREE  
Fall Protection Equipment!**

# CEO REPORT

## Moving Forward

2011 IS SHOWING MANY SIGNS of moving forward from the challenges that we've all faced in the construction industry in the past four years. Through August we have seen reported payrolls up 17 percent over 2010 and we've added 79 new Members at more than \$3,000,000 in new business premium so far this year. Another encouraging sign is our incurred Loss Ratio is at 24.5 percent for the year, which is well below the industry average. All these indicators give us a sense of positive transition as areas of the construction market begin to slowly recover.

Just like your business, we are monitoring all the aspects of what we do in order to make sure we are providing the best overall program to meet your needs year in and year out. Value is found in the overall formula (price, experience, quality, service, reputation, etc.) and not in one business element alone. We continue to evaluate how we're doing in relationship to our mission of being a cost effective, long-term strategy for Minnesota's construction industry.

Some of the challenges we've faced as a result of the economy the past few years are medical inflation (up 5-8 percent each year over the last 4-5 years), reduction in investment income (the collateral for our large posting with the Dept. of Commerce is mainly CD's that will have rates renewing at less than 1 percent in 2012), and a lack of light duty jobs to be filled by injured employees as they recover from work related injuries. All of this has taken place in a time when workers' comp rates have been flat which will change in 2012. Even with the move toward higher rates in 2012, TBG is committed to delivering on all levels of service in our program.

You already participate in one of the best benefits we bring to your bottom line in our "Pay-As-You-Go" monthly reporting program. We've never had any of our Members tell us that they want to go back to the old way of paying their premiums and trying to manage a large "catch-up" audit at the end of the year.

Regarding our commitment to aggressively managing claims for our Members, we have instituted a new bill review and pharmacy program that has helped us reduce the costs associated with pharmaceutical expenses which is one of the main drivers of medical inflation. We have already seen the evidence of savings since the program was implemented in August.

Our team of certified Loss Control representatives continues to provide the vast majority of all our safety training and services at no cost to our Members! Our Members save by no longer having to pay an independent safety consultant for periodic services and general training. We specialize in providing "Customized" safety training to meet the specific needs of your business.

2012 will mark our 15th year in business! It's a great reason to celebrate our longevity and stability as your workers' comp program. We remain committed to adding value to your business. I encourage you to continue to work safe, take advantage of the many benefits we include in our program and finish well in 2011 as we look to a new year and another 15 years together! Thank you for your business!

  
STU THOMPSON, CEO

# MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS



## ATTENTION DRIVERS: NEAR MISS

BY ADAM TRIPP – TBG LOSS CONTROL REPRESENTATIVE

FLEET SAFETY PROGRAMS are in place to protect the company and employees alike. It is important to have a program that has appropriate disciplinary procedures in place for when employees do not follow the company's safety programs. Case in point an employee for a TBG Member had a sobering near miss that could have easily taken his life.

Always being alert of your surroundings is essential while driving. Whether it is a dashboard full of paperwork, using a phone while driving, or messing with the radio everything can prove to be a distraction. In this case an employee turned onto a street that had recently received extensive storm damage. The operator of the vehicle was distracted by using his phone. As his attention was focused on the phone, the vehicle ran headlong into a tree branch that was suspended across the road. As the truck's momentum continued forward, it loaded the branch like a spring. The branch strained under the force of the vehicle and it slid up over the hood smashing all of bodywork along the way and slammed into the windshield. The windshield and front corner column fortunately deflected the branch enough to go up and over the truck. The employee had no idea what he had hit because the impact was so great and he wasn't looking at the time he struck the branch. The vehicle was totaled and the employee was fortunate to walk away with his life. The branch could have easily smashed through both the windshield and corner post and crushed him. The employer had a detailed fleet safety program complete with a disciplinary procedures. This employee had previous infractions on his record so unfortunately the employee had to be terminated. In no way is this a success in that the employee was fired but at some point there needs to be consequences for choices that are made while working. This is a case where the employee chose to break the fleet safety policy by using the phone at an inappropriate time while driving and endangered himself and those around him. Employees need to understand that behaviors like these will not be tolerated.

For help with setting up a fleet safety or disciplinary program contact your TBG Loss Control Representative.

## 2011–2012 Training Classes

TBG Loss Control has these upcoming training opportunities on the calendar for 2011–2012. Please view the dates below for topics that may interest your company and employees. We are continuously seeking feedback from our Members for additional courses to offer. Visit our website at [www.tbgnm.com/SafetySeminars.asp](http://www.tbgnm.com/SafetySeminars.asp) often to check for newly posted courses.

### 2011

Nov 29	Competent Person Residential Fall Protection
Dec 6 & 7	OSHA 10 Hour Construction Safety
Dec 15	Competent Person Excavation/Trenching

### 2012

Jan 9–12	OSHA 30 Hour Construction Safety
Jan 24	Competent Person Fall Protection
Feb 9	Competent Person Excavation/Trenching
Feb 21	Competent Person Scaffolding
Feb 28 & 29	OSHA 10 Hour Construction Safety

**FOR FULL COURSE DETAILS** and course registration visit our website at [www.tbgnm.com/SafetySeminars.asp](http://www.tbgnm.com/SafetySeminars.asp)

## New Additions to Safety Video Lending Library

Check out the latest safety videos recently added to our lending library. They address relevant safety issues, provide practical guidance and instruction, and show appropriate safety techniques.

- ★ Driven to Distraction II
- ★ Safe Winter Driving
- ★ Crane Inspection
- ★ Combustible Dust
- ★ Asbestos in Construction
- ★ Arc Flash Safety Awareness
- ★ Construction Confined Space Entry
- ★ Confined Space Rescue, Personal Fall Protection – One Step Beyond
- ★ Suspended Scaffolds in Construction
- ★ Construction Fall Protection – Get Arrested
- ★ Asbestos Awareness – Understand the Risk
- ★ Roadway Worker Safety – In the Zone
- ★ Four DVD Trenching/Excavation Series

# LOSS CONTROL

## Take Advantage of Loss Control Safety Services

TBG's LOSS CONTROL REPRESENTATIVES are Construction Specialists and only work with contractors and construction-related businesses. As a Member of The Builders Group you will work with a Loss Control Representative that is dedicated to supporting your Safety and Loss Control efforts. They know and understand that safety is a core element when it comes to increasing productivity and controlling costs in a competitive market, with the ultimate end result being employee safety.

TBG's Loss Control Department is constantly partnering with various entities in an effort to provide the highest quality of services and training to the Membership. Organizations we've teamed with over the last couple of months include AGCMN, MN OSHA Consultation, ASSE – NW Chapter, Mid-Minnesota Builders Association, Arrowhead Builders Association, Lakes Region Builders Association, and Northern Minnesota Builders Association. Courses we've offered include OSHA 10 Hour Construction Safety, OSHA 30 Hour Construction Safety, Competent Person Fall Protection classes, Competent Person Excavation/Trenching classes, and various customized safety training programs.

**TO LEARN MORE** about what is available to TBG Members, call your TBG Loss Control Representative or visit [www.tbgnm.com](http://www.tbgnm.com) and click on "Services" then "Loss Control & Safety Services."

## LOSS CONTROL SERVICES

### A VALUE ADDED SERVICE FOR MEMBERS

#### Customized Safety and Loss Control Programs

- ▶ Employment Practices (Applications, Job Descriptions, Conditional Job Offers, Drug Testing, Physicals, etc.)
- ▶ AWAIR/Safety Programs
- ▶ OSHA Compliance Programs
- ▶ Claims Management/Return-to-Work Programs
- ▶ Site Specific Safety Programs

#### Website Resources

- ▶ Written Safety Resources ready to download and customize
- ▶ TBG Member Safety Seminar information
- ▶ Safety Video Lending Library with over 60 titles available in DVD/VHS
- ▶ VIVID Online Learning Systems with over 50 available titles for computer based safety training
- ▶ Safety Vendor/Resource links
- ▶ Safety Recalls/Announcements
- ▶ TBG Loss Control/Member service summary

#### Hazard Identification & Control

- ▶ Jobsite Safety Surveys
- ▶ Safety and Risk Assessments
- ▶ Mock OSHA Audits

#### Industrial Hygiene Services

- ▶ Employee Noise Exposure testing
- ▶ Carbon Monoxide (CO) monitoring
- ▶ 4 Gas monitoring
- ▶ Respirator Fit Testing

#### MN OSHA Consultation

- ▶ Assistance with OSHA Safety Grants
- ▶ Relationship with MN OSHA Consultation for additional services

#### Customized Training for Specific Needs

- ▶ Hands-on demo training center at TBG Headquarters
- ▶ State-of-the-art classroom

#### Training Topics include, but not limited to:

- OSHA 10 Hour Construction Safety
- OSHA 30 Hour Construction Safety
- MN OSHA AWAIR
- Safety Management Seminars
- Supervisory Training
- Employment Practices
- Drug Testing
- Return-to-Work Programs
- Fall Protection
- Personal Fall Arrest Systems
- Scaffolding
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Hand and Power Tools
- Machine Guarding
- Excavation/Trenching
- Confined Space
- Electrical Safety
- NFPA 70E – Arc Flash
- Material Handling
- Heavy Equipment
- Hazard Communication/Employee Right-to-Know
- Ladder Safety
- Walking/Working Surfaces
- Forklift Safety
- Driving/Defensive Driving

# MNLA OVERVIEW

## MNLA is on a mission!

**THE MISSION of the Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association is to help nursery and landscape related companies in Minnesota and the surrounding region operate their businesses more successfully.**

To achieve this mission, the association provides continuing technical and business education; promotes nursery and landscape products and services; provides representation in Minnesota state government affairs; encourages networking and the exchange of ideas among members; provides group purchasing and other member services; and secures the future by supporting and funding research.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS

MNLA members are environmental stewards trained in improving the urban and rural landscape. Whether you want new permeable pavement technology designed and installed to help control stormwater runoff, need advice on plants, a specialist in lakeshore landscaping, earth-friendly lawn care, garden installation and maintenance; or a water-saving landscape irrigation system, members of the MNLA can help you. For homeowners, yards and gardens improved with plants or professional landscaping can help a home bring a 5 to 10 percent higher price when sold.

### PLANT PROFESSIONALS

Many MNLA members are trained plant professionals. They know what plants will be hardy enough to survive and thrive in Minnesota's harsh climate. MNLA members keep up to date on what plants may potentially threaten native habitats and work with authorities to take

invasive plants off the market.

A nine-member Board of Directors governs the association. MNLA has approximately 150 member-volunteers actively involved on 20 committees that participate in implementing education, public relations and government affairs programming. The association has four full-time and three part-time staff people.

In addition to its in-house staff, MNLA has the firm of Boland & Associates on retainer as its legislative and regulatory consultant. MNLA is involved in a number of government affairs concerns, including property and sales taxes, pesticides, tree planting initiatives, invasive pests and plants, water management, green infrastructure, permeable pavement acceptance as a stormwater BMP, and comprehensive immigration reform.

MNLA's subsidiary organization, the MNLA Foundation, seeks to improve the environment through investments in horticultural and landscape research and education.

MNLA partners with the Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation to present the Minnesota Green Expo, a 190,000-square foot trade show and educational conference held annually in January at the Minneapolis Convention Center. More than 7,000 industry professionals from five states attend, making the Expo the largest event of its kind in the north central region. To learn

more about this event, see [www.minnesotagreenexpo.com](http://www.minnesotagreenexpo.com).

MNLA is engaged nationally through partnerships with the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA), the Irrigation Association (IA), the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), and the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA).

**If you have questions about MNLA programs and activities, please contact Executive Director Bob Fitch at [bob@mnl.biz](mailto:bob@mnl.biz). Organizations interested in advertising or sponsorship opportunities should contact Advertising Manager Betsy Pierre at [betsy@pierreproductions.com](mailto:betsy@pierreproductions.com).**



**FOR MORE information, visit [MNLA.biz](http://MNLA.biz).**

**APPROXIMATELY 1,500 COMPANIES** are members of MNLA, making it one of the five largest state green industry associations in the U.S. The majority of members are small, family-owned companies that have 10 or fewer full-time, year-round employees. The following types of companies are members:

- ▶ Nursery growers
- ▶ Commercial flower growers
- ▶ Retail garden centers, nurseries and greenhouses
- ▶ Landscape contractors
- ▶ Hardscape contractors
- ▶ Landscape designers
- ▶ Irrigation professionals
- ▶ Landscape management services
- ▶ Professional gardening services
- ▶ Tree care services
- ▶ Hardscape suppliers
- ▶ Landscape, nursery, or greenhouse suppliers
- ▶ Related suppliers of equipment and business services

Collectively, nursery and landscape companies in Minnesota generate approximately \$2.1 billion in annual sales!

# HIRING PRACTICES

## The Importance of Pre-Hire Screening

BY ADAM TRIPP – TBG LOSS CONTROL REPRESENTATIVE

WHAT ARE YOUR biggest hurdles when it comes to hiring? Often, as with the majority of contractors, when you need an employee you need them yesterday. This puts an employer in a tough situation because hiring someone for the sake of filling a position rarely benefits the company in the long run. Pre-planning can minimize the burden of hiring the wrong person by reducing the time it takes to go through the hiring process.

All steps in the process should be followed such as filling out an application, performing drug testing, and quite possibly the most important step - get a pre-employment physical. The more that you can do on the front end, the lesser the number of hardships you can expect to face in the future. According to a study performed by Right Management, the cost of replacing an employee due to turnover or simply hiring the wrong employee can be as high as two-and-a-half to three times the annual salary. Consequently you want to hire someone that will be a positive influence on your company for the foreseeable future.

As we are all aware, once you hire the employee, you get them as they come. This includes any preexisting injuries the potential employee may have. Time is of the essence to make sure your jobsites are fully staffed and therefore as efficient and safe as possible. If a sound program is not in place, rushed and ill-informed decisions will run your

company rather than you. There is no question that a good hiring program will take some time, effort, and have some costs associated with it. These added costs pale in comparison to having to repeat the hiring process over and over, have higher insurance costs due to increased losses, decreased productivity, added training costs, etc. which all can be attributed to hiring the wrong employee.

As mentioned above to do this a company needs to formulate job descriptions, have conditional job offers, perform drug testing, and last but not least have candidates go through pre-employment physicals or some sort of isokinetic testing to establish a baseline of their physical capabilities. There are Occupational Medicine Clinics that understand what construction employees are required to do day-in and day-out and have developed tests to make sure the prospective employee can safely perform the job they are applying for. The safety of employees with preexisting injuries is very important because as an employer, you don't want to put them into a situation that could reinjure themselves. By taking these steps you will hopefully prevent injuries before they occur by hiring employees that are physically and mentally fit for your trade.

**TO FURTHER DISCUSS** what a legitimate hiring program entails and resources that aid in the process, contact your TBG Loss Control Representative.



## Safety During the Winter Months

BY JOHN PRIMOZICH, CSP, ARM – LOSS CONTROL MANAGER

With the change in the season brings a change in what contractors can expect for hazards in the workplace. Contractors often take time to plan safety into their work for the day. This has proven to be an effective tool to help reduce the likelihood of an accident. With winter right around the corner, contractors have to be aware of, and be prepared to address/plan for, the unique hazards that can arise because of changes in the weather. Below is a list of some items you can plan to think about this coming winter:

- › Driving accidents due to slippery road ways
- › Carbon monoxide exposure (see related article)
- › Slips and falls due to slippery walkways and work surfaces
- › Hypothermia and frostbite due to the cold weather exposure
- › Being struck by falling objects such as ice, tree limbs, and utility poles
- › Electrocutation due to downed power lines or downed objects in contact with power lines
- › Falls from heights (e.g. falls from roof while removing snow)
- › Collapse under weight of snow
- › Burns from fires caused by energized line contact or equipment failure
- › Dehydration
- › Back injuries or heart attack while removing snow

Don't forget to plan for these hazards during the winter months. For more information on, or assistance with, the above mentioned items please contact your TBG Loss Control Representative.

The seasonal transition sets the stage for increased danger of...

# CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

BY KATIE SCHOFIELD, CSP, ARM, CHST –  
TBG LOSS CONTROL REPRESENTATIVE

AS TEMPERATURES COOL DOWN and the seasons begin to change, more construction work will be moved inside, enclosed, artificially heated and protected from the elements. This seasonal transition sets the stage for increased danger of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Do any of these scenarios sound familiar?

★ Enclosing scaffolding or excavations with plastic sheeting and running a heater for masonry and/or concrete work.

- ★ Closing doors or turning off the ventilation system in the shop to keep it warm while welding or running a forklift.
- ★ Pouring a large concrete floor indoors with concrete buggies.
- ★ Using a gasoline powered compressor, power-washer, pump, or saw indoors.
- ★ Employees staying to finish the pour/job/task even after the CO monitor alarms.

If any of these made you answer

“Yes” or made you think twice about your operations, most likely your employees could be at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that mixes readily with air and is completely undetectable to the human senses. People are routinely exposed to carbon monoxide on a daily basis at work, in their home and car, at social gatherings, and during recreational activities.

## When carbon monoxide gets in the blood, it overpowers oxygen and attaches to hemoglobin. This essentially suffocates the victim.

Carbon monoxide is the by-product of incomplete combustion. Natural gas, coal, wood, gasoline, diesel, grills, improperly adjusted appliances, automobiles and heavy equipment produce large amounts of CO [6]. Anything on the jobsite that is run by fuel, including tools, heaters, and forklifts, can produce CO. Additionally, cigarette and cigar smoke contain large amounts of CO, a larger percentage than the allowed regulated percentage for a whole workday [3][6]! Carbon monoxide can also come from other sources like methylene chloride, which is a common industrial solvent.

When carbon monoxide is in the air, it enters our body through inhalation, where it dissolves in the blood stream. Normally, our body transports oxygen with its red blood cells and hemoglobin, a special part of the cell. Oxygen will attach to the hemoglobin and be carried to all the parts of the body. Unfortunately when carbon monoxide gets in the blood, it overpowers oxygen and attaches to hemoglobin. Because of the way hemoglobin and carbon monoxide attach, they have over a 210 times greater attraction than oxygen does. Carbon monoxide uses up all the room for oxygen, which basically keeps oxygen from attaching or being carried

through the body. This essentially suffocates the victim. Carbon monoxide's extreme ability to bind to hemoglobin makes it very dangerous, even in small amounts. Only 0.1% of carbon monoxide in the air can cause possible death [1][3][4].

The signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can be subtle, come on without warning, and mimic other physical conditions or the flu, a cold, or food poisoning. Failure to recognize them could be deadly [7]. Carbon monoxide poisoning will mainly cause effects in the heart and brains, because those are the parts of the body that need the most oxygen [1][3][4]. These effects can alter physical abilities and performance of skilled tasks, as well as affect judgment and critical thinking skills. These impairments often make a victim unable to escape a critical situation or even recognize it in

the first place (see "Common Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning" on page 10).

Carbon monoxide poisoning is complicated because not everyone experiences symptoms at the same levels of CO in the air. Severity of the symptoms will be affected by the concentration of CO in the air, how long the person is exposed, and how hard they are working and breathing. Those people who are doing heavy labor and working hard, such as employees on a construction site, are more susceptible because they are breathing heavier, and thus getting poisoned faster [1][2]. Also certain employees, such as welders, shop mechanics, and forklift operators are at greater risk. Additionally, there are other groups of people who are more susceptible to carbon



## Plan ahead for a proper ventilation system. Opening a window or running a fan is not enough.

### Common Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- › Headache, tightness across the forehead
- › Dizziness
- › Visual disturbances
- › Confusion
- › Flu-like symptoms
- › Coordination and balance difficulties
- › Shortness of breath and chest pain
- › Nausea
- › Drowsiness
- › Lack of energy
- › Coma or loss of consciousness

monoxide poisoning, including people with heart disease, obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, those who are obese, young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and fetuses.

If you suspect that someone is suffering from CO poisoning, ventilate the area and get them to fresh air as soon as possible. Rescuers should make sure that the area is safe for them to enter before they remove the victim; otherwise, they could be overcome by the carbon monoxide as well! Call 911 and keep the victim quiet and still. Supply them with pure oxygen if it is available, and perform CPR if the victim does not have a pulse [3]. Acute poisoning victims make a full recovery, but if the poisoning is severe or causes unconsciousness, delayed degenerative conditions may develop, sometimes leading to death. It has also been shown than chronic exposures, day in and day out, have been linked to hearing loss, heart disease, neurological conditions, and lung disorders [3][5][7].

OSHA regulates the amount of CO a person can be exposed to averaged over an eight hour workday. According to construction standards, an employee may be exposed to no more than 50 ppm, but general industry standards and other organizations have recommended levels much lower, 35 ppm and 25 ppm. Try to eliminate carbon monoxide at the source by switching to equipment run by batteries,

electricity, or compressed air. If this is not an option, keep cumulative CO exposure as low as possible. Plan ahead for a proper ventilation system and have monitoring equipment in place whenever a fuel powered piece of equipment or machine is being used indoors. Opening a window or running a fan is NOT enough! Properly maintain and calibrate all equipment to reduce CO levels, and be aware of CO exposure after work hours, as well. Smoking, driving in heavy traffic, maladjusted home appliances, and other activities can cause exposure to CO throughout the whole day. Thus it is obvious why it is so critical to be vigilant against CO exposure.

Monitoring devices for CO are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased for the site, shop, office, and home. For industrial and construction settings, a commercial or industrial grade monitor for CO should be used, or the standard four gas meter for monitoring of unknown atmospheres will also detect the presence of CO and alert workers of possible hazardous environments. In the office or home, a simple CO alarm can be plugged into outlets. It is recommended that one detector be placed on each floor of a home or office. Every year many people needlessly die and become poisoned by carbon monoxide. Awareness of signs and symptoms of CO poisoning and the causes of CO production are one of the best defenses against accidental poisoning.



<sup>1</sup> URL: [http://www.postgradmed.com/issues/1999/01\\_99/tomaszewski.htm](http://www.postgradmed.com/issues/1999/01_99/tomaszewski.htm), Post Graduate Medicine Online, (10/14/07)

<sup>2</sup> URL: [http://www.postgradmed.com/issues/1999/01\\_99/tomaszewski.htm](http://www.postgradmed.com/issues/1999/01_99/tomaszewski.htm), Post Graduate Medicine Online, (10/14/07)

<sup>3</sup> URL: [http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf), OSHA FACT SHEET, (10/14/07)

<sup>4</sup> URL: [http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf), OSHA FACT SHEET, (10/14/07)

<sup>5</sup> URL: [http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/carbonmonoxide-factsheet.pdf), OSHA FACT SHEET, (10/14/07)

<sup>6</sup> URL: <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/healthguidelines/carbonmonoxide/recognition.html>, Occupational Safety and Health Guideline for Carbon Monoxide, (10/14/07)

# Fall Protection Quiz

## You Could Win FREE Fall Protection Equipment!

In response to the recent changes to the Fall Protection guidelines, TBG Loss Control has been busy educating its Members about the new requirements and equipment available to them. Our past two newsletters have featured educational articles related to the most recent Fall Protection updates. It's time to test your knowledge to see how much you know about fall protection! Those that complete and return the Fall Protection Quiz will be entered into a drawing to win one of six Compliance-in-a-Can Fall Protection Kits to get you started on your way to Fall Protection compliance. Special thanks to 3M, Capital Safety, and Continental Safety Equipment for donating the Compliance-in-a-Can kits.

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

### MAIL QUIZ TO:

The Builders Group of MN  
 Attn: John Primozich  
 2919 Eagandale Blvd., Suite 100  
 Eagan, MN 55121

- True  False 1. Personal Fall Arrest Systems consist of an anchor, body harness, and some means of connecting the worker to the anchor.
- True  False 2. Positioning devices are designed to catch the worker after they have fallen.
- True  False 3. A ladder safety device is one example of a positioning device system.
- True  False 4. Many pieces of fall arrest equipment have braking systems built in to prevent injury from fall arrest forces on the body.
- True  False 5. Any positioning strap can be used as a lanyard in a fall arrest system.
- True  False 6. Certain working conditions, such as acid, dirt, or extreme weather can degrade fall protection equipment.
- True  False 7. The anchor for a fall arrest system must be able to withstand a force of 5,000 lbs. and have no obstacles below it that a worker could fall into.
- True  False 8. The total distance you can fall is equal to your free fall distance, plus the deceleration distance allowed by your equipment.
- True  False 9. The longest free fall distance allowed is 10ft.
- True  False 10. One way to limit free fall is to raise your tie-off point to the anchor or lifeline.
- True  False 11. No more than 3 people are allowed to hook up to any one single vertical lifeline.
- True  False 12. The strongest way of tying off to your anchor is to use a knot.
- True  False 13. You can safely connect any snap hook directly to a horizontal lifeline.
- True  False 14. Body belts are not used for fall arrest.
- True  False 15. Ladder safety devices let you use both hands to climb the ladder.
- True  False 16. After a co-worker falls, the 1st thing you should do is learn how to use the rescue equipment.
- True  False 17. During a rescue, you may need to provide fall protection for the victim and rescuers.
- True  False 18. The manufacturer's instructions can give you useful information on cleaning, maintenance, and storage of equipment.
- True  False 19. Fall protection equipment should be inspected once each month.
- True  False 20. If inspection shows that an item is damaged, it must be replaced within 2 weeks.



**THE BUILDERS GROUP**  
BUILT BY THE INDUSTRY FOR THE INDUSTRY

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# LADDER SAFETY PROGRAM

## Maintenance Trumps Replacement

BY ADAM TRIPP – TBG LOSS CONTROL REPRESENTATIVE

FEW PIECES OF EQUIPMENT ON a jobsite are as ubiquitous and essential as ladders, and few pieces of equipment receive the use and abuse that they do as well. Therefore having a thorough ladder safety program is essential. Proper use, training, selection, inspection, set-up, replacement, etc. are just a few of the topics that need to be addressed to keep people safe while using ladders. Ladders are a significant investment and need to be properly maintained otherwise unnecessary replacement costs quickly add up. This is especially true if your crews are using fiberglass ladders. Ways to reduce the expense of replacing ladders would be to have an active maintenance program. Few companies want to take on the liability of fixing them in-house and therefore there are service companies available that will come to your office to inspect, fix any ladder defects, and recertify the ladders for service.

With the rough nature of the construction industry one can expect the average lifespan for fiberglass ladders to be anywhere between two and four years. Wear and tear, UV degradation, paint overspray, etc. all decrease the life expectancy. Therefore having someone that is certified to fix and maintain a ladder is essential. One such company is Batavia Services, Inc. and is used with great success by a TBG Member that spends most of their day working from ladders. According to Batavia, an average inspection/repair program costs roughly \$40 to \$60 per ladder per year. New fiberglass ladders are a significant investment and can easily cost between \$150 and \$350 apiece. If not properly maintained having to purchase new ladders every three years on average is a staggering at best and not likely to fit easily into the budget. By using Batavia's services you can hopefully expect to see the average lifespan

of a ladder increase to four times that. Not only is it cost effective in the long term it will improve the safety of your jobsites by providing safe equipment for your employees.

**Batavia Services, Inc.**  
The Nation's Leading Ladder Repair Company  
Call 1-800-231-6374 to schedule an on-site inspection today!  
Help for reliable ladder inspection, repair and recertification program. We adhere to all ANSI standards, OSHA.

### Ladder Safety

**Use Ladders Safely**  
Ladders are so useful and commonplace that they are often taken for granted. That's a mistake, because falling off a ladder also is commonplace. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that each year more than 911,000 people are treated in hospital emergency rooms, doctors' offices and clinics and other medical settings because they failed to use ladders safely. Most of the injuries are cuts, bruises and fractured bones. However, more than 300 people a year die from injuries related to ladders—that's almost one death per day.

Orthopedic surgeons who treat these injuries, and the American Ladder Institute know that many of these injuries and deaths could be avoided by following safety guidelines on the use of ladders.

**Use the Correct Ladder**  
Use a ladder of proper length to reach the working height you need. Inside a house, that probably means a step stool; outside, you may need a taller stepstool, and for some projects, an even taller single or extension ladder. Use a ladder according to use and working load—the combined weight of the climber and the load being carried.\*

TYPE	DUTY RATING	WORKING LOAD (LBS. MAX.)
A	Industrial-duty	300
I	Industrial-duty	250
II	Consumer-medium	225
III	Household-light	225

**Inspect the Ladder**  
Always inspect the ladder before you use it. Never use the ladder if it is damaged, broken or bent. Don't make a temporary repair of broken or missing parts and then use the ladder. The temporary repair could fail while you're high off the ground. A ladder should be free from grease, oil, mud,

**FOR CONTACT INFORMATION** visit Batavia's website at [www.laddermatters.com](http://www.laddermatters.com) or contact your TBG Loss Control Representative to talk about ladder safety program requirements.