AVOIDING ARC FLASH
ELECTRICAL EVENTS CAN SEVERELY INJURE – OR KILL – WORKERS

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ladder’s bottom should be one-quarter of its working length away from the wall.
• Keep the spaces around the top and bottom of the ladder uncluttered.
• Use a ladder with non-conductive side rails if the ladder could come into contact with energized electrical equipment. Keep all ladders a minimum of 10 feet away from power lines.
• Never use an extension ladder horizontally.

With any kind of ladder, follow some important basic safety steps:
• Maintain three points of contact (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand) when on a ladder.
• Do not carry tools when climbing or descending a ladder – use a tool belt instead.
• Ensure the ladder is not placed on a slippery surface.

Avoid nail gun injuries
Nail guns are helpful tools, but they also have the potential to cause injury. NIOSH notes that nail gun injuries result in an estimated 37,000 emergency department visits every year, with 68 percent of these visits involving workers.

NIOSH states that seven common risk factors contribute to nail gun injuries:
1. Unintentional nail discharge from double fire
2. Unintentional nail discharge due to knocking the safety contact with the trigger squeezed
3. A nail penetrating completely through a piece of lumber
4. A nail ricocheting after striking a hard surface
5. A worker completely missing the work target
6. Using a nail gun in awkward positions
7. Circumventing safety mechanisms

Basic safety tips to remember when operating a nail gun include:
• Never fire a nail gun when co-workers are in its path.

TO PREVENT FUTURE OCCURRENCES:
✓ Employers should not allow their workers to access roofing areas when conditions are windy, wet or icy.
✓ Workers should use a personal fall protection system during all phases of a roofing job.
✓ Employers should have a written fall protection program in place.
✓ Employers should fully plan their fall protection system before it is used.

*This report is the product of NIOSH’s Cooperative State partner. The findings and conclusions in each report are those of the individual Cooperative State partner and do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of NIOSH.

To read the full report, click on the “Safety Tips” tab at safetyandhealthmagazine.com.