

TriState Habitat for Humanity

Safety on the Work Site

Safety on the work site is our number one priority and everyone is expected to be a safety monitor

General safety tips:

- Heat exhaustion and dehydration are a concern in summer heat and humidity. Drink lots of water and take breaks often. If volunteers start to feel lightheaded or dizzy or if they stop sweating, volunteers should notify their crew leader and seek shade and drink water immediately.
- Move slowly and be aware of surroundings, especially when moving and carrying materials. Be aware of excavations, openings, edges of slabs and slippery areas.
- Wear a hardhat whenever overhead work is being done.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Do not use a power tool unless you have been properly trained in the tool's use.
- Be sure to notify volunteers that if they are uncomfortable with any task assigned to them, they should not attempt the task; notify their crew leader.
- Nobody (except the trained operator) is permitted to use any of the nail guns. Everyone must wear safety glasses when a nail gun is in use.

Ladder safety:

- Be aware that severe injury can result from a fall even from a low height. Be particularly careful when working at a height of 6 feet or more.
- Be aware of the weight capacity of the ladder and platform you are using.
- Do not place tools on the edge of ladders, roofs or scaffolding platforms.
- Do not throw anything off the roof without first getting confirmation from the ground that it is clear.
- Never toss anything to someone on a roof, scaffolding or ladder; hand it up to them.
- If a ladder is unbalanced, dig down the higher side to make the ground level, rather than putting a block under the lower side.
- Position ladder 1 foot from the wall for every 4 foot rise.
- Always wear a hardhat if working underneath scaffolding or near someone working on a roof or ladder.
- Look ABOVE before moving when working on the roof.
- Do not use the top two steps of a ladder and have a partner hold the ladder to keep it steady.
- Only one person should go up a ladder at a time.
- Watch for power lines.
- When working on a roof, move slowly and carefully. Use toe boards when necessary.
- Be careful with tools and other objects so they do not fall onto someone below.

Dress with safety in mind:

- Volunteers MUST wear close-toed shoes on the site at all times, preferably work boots
- Eye protection is required especially while using power tools.

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- Hardhats are required when overhead work is being done.
- Clothes should fit comfortably and should not be baggy or hanging down. It is preferred that volunteers wear long pants. Shorts are at the Site Leader's discretion.
- Shirts must be worn at all times

Power tool safety:

- Do not use a power tool unless you have been properly trained in the tool's use.
- Before operating, inspect the cords, electrical outlets and blades.
- Use circular saws on a stable surface (saw horses or a cutting table) and never reach under material while it is being cut.
- Safety glasses must be worn when operating power tools.
- Have a crew leader teach how to operate power tools to volunteers who are not familiar or comfortable with them.
- Do not interrupt a person using a power tool. Wait until they are through with the job and then approach the operator.

Materials handling:

- If nails are protruding from scrap lumber, DO NOT bend them down, remove them with a hammer immediately.
- All areas should be cleared immediately of debris to remove situations that may cause someone to trip and fall.
- Stack material so it is stable and secure.
- Be especially careful not to hit other people when carrying long objects such as lumber.
- Tools should not be placed above people's heads (such as on top of a wall or on a ladder).
- Any time an object is lifted, keep back in a vertical position; bend your knees and lift with your legs.
- Get help with heavy or long loads. Do not lift beyond your strength.

Habitat for Humanity International's Insurance Company is offering free online safety training classes if you are interested in taking any of these classes please visit our Volunteer page