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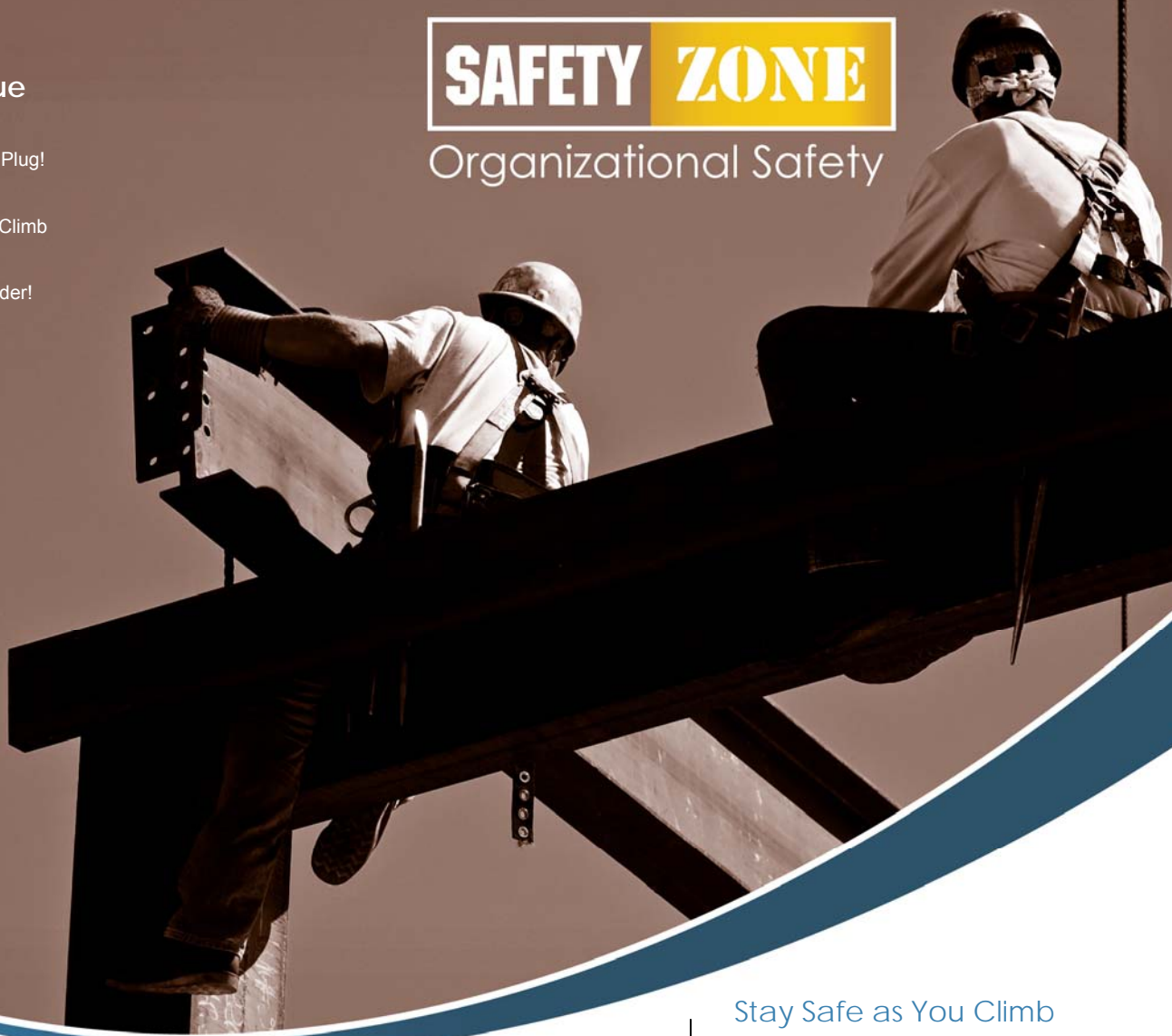
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## Think Before You Plug!

**Extension cords make doing tasks at work a lot more convenient. They are handy, useful and easy to operate. However, if not operated properly, they pose serious dangers such as burns and shock. It may seem silly that a simple cord requires instructions, but there are legitimate dangers involved.**

Extension cords come in two- or three-wire types for various uses. The two-wire pronged cords are designed for small appliances and generally will not be used on the job. However, the three-wired cords are beneficial for those who operate power tools. For construction site workers, the National Electric Code requires that specific cords be used. These items are marked with the word “outdoor” or “WA” on the jacket.

Cords are also marked with labels regarding usage, size and wattage rating.

The gauge of the cord is indicated by a number that corresponds with the item you wish to plug in. Although this may be confusing, the smaller the gauge number on the cord, the larger the power wattage of the appliance.

### Safety Tips

Follow these recommendations when using extension cords on the job.

- ✓ Carefully read the instructions for the power tools you are planning to use to determine the wattage needed from the cord.
- ✓ Look for cords with the UL marking. This means the cord has been tested for safety hazards.

## Stay Safe as You Climb

Each year, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reports the top 10 most frequently cited violations. Like clockwork, ladders are on the list year after year. Can you guess the top four injury-causing violations? Workers violate the OSHA citation when:

- 1) They use a ladder for a purpose other than for which it is designed.
- 2) They use the top or top step of a stepladder as a step.
- 3) They use ladders on unstable and uneven surfaces.
- 4) They do not tag defective ladders and withdraw them from service.

Sound familiar? As you can see, these practices are extremely dangerous and result in hundreds of deaths each year. However, accidents, injuries and deaths are preventable by using ladders safely on the job.

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- ✓ Unplug cords when they are not in use, as they still conduct electricity from an outlet.
- ✓ Never use a cord that is cut or damaged. If you touch a piece of wire, you are vulnerable to burning or shocking.
- ✓ Disconnect the cord by the electrical source; do not pull on the cord itself.
- ✓ Use extension cords only on a temporary basis.
- ✓ Insert the plug fully in the outlet so that no part of the prongs is visible.
- ✓ Never use cords with the inappropriate wattage for the tool.
- ✓ Be mindful of where you place cords on the floor. They can be a tripping hazard if you (or someone else) are not careful.

- ✓ If you use extension cords on a regular basis, inspect them habitually for damage to the cord and/or plug.

When cords are plugged in, they will be a little warm to the touch if they are used at their maximum rating. If you notice that a cord is *hot* to the touch, remove it immediately and replace. This is a sign that the wires are failing. ■



STAY SAFE AS YOU CLIMB CONTINUED

### Safety Tips

Here are some things to remember when using a ladder at work:

- ✓ Place the ladder on the ground so that the distance from the base to the wall is equal to one-fourth the distance from the base to the point of support.
- ✓ Always face the ladder when climbing up or down, and hold on to the sides with both hands.
- ✓ Always have one hand holding on to the ladder while working.
- ✓ Wear non-skid shoes or boots while working.
- ✓ Never place a ladder on a box or other object to make it taller. Instead, place it on a sturdy surface and simply use a taller ladder for higher projects.
- ✓ Only one person should be on a ladder at a time.
- ✓ When using a straight ladder, never stand above the third rung from the top, and never stand above the third highest step while using a stepladder.
- ✓ Avoid electrical wires and equipment if using a metal ladder.
- ✓ Ladders should be a minimum of three feet beyond the working surface or roofline.
- ✓ Never place a ladder in front of an unlocked, unguarded or unblocked door.
- ✓ Engage locks when using extension ladders.
- ✓ Place straight, single or extension ladders at a 75° angle.
- ✓ Check and obey weight constraints. Your weight plus the weight of materials should not exceed the maximum load rating.
- ✓ Never lean too far off one side.
- ✓ Get off the ladder immediately if you start to feel dizzy or light-headed. ■

## Respect the Ladder!

A ladder is a tool just like a hammer, drill or saw. It should be stored in a safe, dry place. Never leave a raised ladder unattended. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, check for wear and damage before each use. If the ladder appears to be damaged in any fashion, notify your supervisor and have it taken out of service until it is either fixed or discarded. ■