

Ladder Safety – There’s an App for That

Injuries related to use of ladders often come from overlooking the fundamentals – things we knew to do or not do but were tucked back in the junk drawer part of our mind. Had they been up front, we may have instead just been able to talk about a close call.



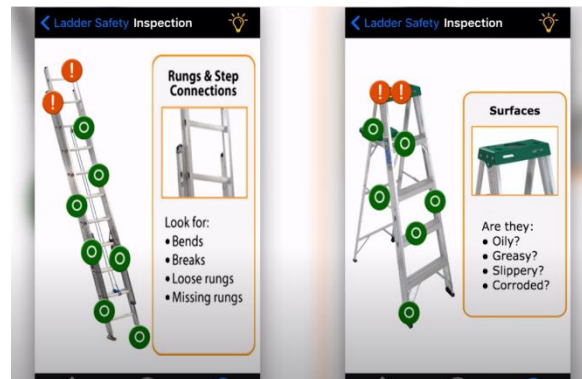
That’s the way it is with most safety injuries. Let’s face it, when someone is giving us a safety briefing, rarely are they breaking new ground, unless it is a new piece of equipment or some specialty circumstances. No, much like when our parents told us a million cagillion times to watch both ways when crossing the streets, it’s more about drilling it into our heads or bringing it to the forefront of our attention.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, had this in mind when they developed a free app for your phone with safety tips, information, and tools for step ladders and extension ladders. A search for Ladder Safety or NIOSH in the App Store on iPhones or Android devices should bring it up.



The safety tips in the app are pretty basic. You know why? Because the best practices for safety with ladders is pretty basic. But, much like “tie your shoes,” it helps to revisit them periodically.

The safety tips are perfect for leading a tailgate safety talk. Have everyone download the app to their phone (that way, no one has to look at each other or communicate in person for ten minutes and that’s apparently our thing these days) and the crew leader or someone else can guide everyone to some or all the content (you could probably get through it all in about 10 minutes or so) and see if any has any questions or wants to share a close call story.



The information is largely based on the ANSI A14 Ladder Safety standards and there is even an angle measuring tool that uses your cellular telephone’s gyroscope to determine if your ladder is in a safe range, which can help develop good setup habits.



The Delaware T²/LTAP Center’s Municipal Engineering Circuit Rider is intended to provide technical assistance and training to local agencies and so if you have safety questions, contact Matt Carter at matheu@udel.edu or (302) 831-7236.