



RISK MANAGEMENT
SAFETY AND
LOSS CONTROL

Risky Business

SAFETY & LOSS CONTROL NEWS — MARCH 2022

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**THIS
MONTH'S
SAFETY
EMPHASIS IS
BUILDING
ACCESSIBILITY**

INSIDE:

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Accessing Excellence

Most individuals will experience some sort of disability during their lifetime. These disabilities can make even simple tasks more difficult to perform. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed into law. It is a piece of civil rights legislation to provide equal access to anyone with a disability in all aspects of public life: jobs, healthcare, education, transportation, and any public or private facility that is open to the general public. In addition to physical access, individuals with disabilities may need assistance with access to communications and information. Through physical changes to facilities and advances in technology, people with disabilities can be provided with the same accessibility and opportunities to participate in all public services, programs, facilities and activities.

~Kayvan Vafa



Shanon Shares

by Shanon Winston

BE CAREFUL UP THERE

My very first ladder inspection started over a decade ago, being “tossed into the ocean to see if I could swim.” I had just received fall protection and ladder training as a competent person, a competent person being one who is well trained and responsible to assess and determine safe use of said environment or equipment. I was with a team of very experienced competent and quite hilarious coworkers. We were inspecting a location at night, over water, with

red tags and locks in our utility belts and hard hats with flashlights attached. Yes, I was once often caught in the typical gear of what most people think of a safety inspector; goggles, a utility belt, steel toe shoes, a pin in my shirt pocket, a company cell in my pants pocket, and tagging and locking gear in one hand---no clipboard this time!

Now let’s talk about the environment... it was around 4 AM during the winter in Southern California (still hot), so it was very dark. Three of us were in a very large maze of a

(SEE SHARES PAGE 2)

Shanon Shares *continued...*

3,000 sq. ft. facility with a moat running through-out; on either side of the water were uneven surfaces filled with all different kinds of props that could not be damaged. Most of the lighting present in the facility existed in the floors, which of course was not where we were inspecting. We had to go up about 20 feet or so where lighting and walking surfaces became even more sparse. If you looked up, you would see wood, beams, some light, some netting, a black ceiling, and spiderwebs everywhere.

At that moment, the thing that unsettled me the most were the vast amounts of spider webs.

I remember my thought at that time, that if I was hospitalized from a poisonous spider bite, my worker's compensation paperwork better say that I was saving my co-worker from a near fall! But as my group started to joke about what could possibly go wrong with a 40-year-old building in its condition, my fears immediately turned to the mixture of unstable, fixed, wooden and steel ladders we had to travel up and down to get to different heights in this facility. As I nervously laughed with them, we reviewed our plan of attack tagging and locking ladders out of service. And then, what I dreaded to hear from my team members, "ladies first."

A quick prep talk on ladder safety: discuss a plan of attack before assessment; inspect the ladder before use to determine if it is safe for use (rungs, legs, feet, landing platform, etc., are in good condition and appropriate spacing), appropriate markings, such as "Caution" and manufacturer labels are present and legible; climb up and down the ladder maintaining 3 points of contact at all times with hands free (pockets and utility belts come in handy), and a buddy system is always good to have. While this is not an all-inclusive list of requirements and best practices, I'm going to talk about what went wrong so that you can avoid this mistake.

My job was to tag and lock all the ladders that should be taken out of service immediately. The more and higher we climbed, and the more I was able to correctly determine which ladders to tag and lock, the higher my confidence climbed. There is nothing wrong with confidence, as confidence is needed to perform a very risky task. But when confidence be-



**BE
CAREFUL
UP
THERE!**

AED/CPR/First Aid: Life Saving Skills



First aid is medical attention that is administered immediately after an injury or illness occurs, at the location it occurred. It often consists of a one-time, short-term treatment and requires minimal technology or training to administer. During cardiac arrest episodes, there is only a 5% chance of recovery without intervention. With a combination of CPR and defibrillation with an AED, survival rate increase to 70%. In a serious incident, immediate first-aid, CPR and use of an AED can mean the difference between life and death.

Who Should be Trained?

Medic First Aid training is provided to employees who require it as part of their job, and to employees who want to support their department or community. County employees are **encouraged** to obtain certification to help clients, coworkers, family, and the community during emergency medical situations. Field employees who work alone or in remote locations are **required** to have training to ensure readily available first aid in the absence of an infirmary, clinic, or hospital near the workplace (within 3 to 4 minutes).

What Does the Training Include?

The Medic First Aid Basic Plus training curriculum is an adult, child, and infant CPR and first aid training program designed for the adult layperson first aid provider. The class also includes training in the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), a vital component for any sudden cardiac arrest emergency. Examples of subjects covered during the first aid response aspect of the training include: treatment of shock, treatment of choking, bleeding control, diabetic emergencies, stroke, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing, head/neck/spine injuries, broken bones, heat stress and heat stroke, and allergic reactions such as to bee stings.



Sign Up Today!

Risk Management provides monthly AED/CPR/First Aid training classes. Log into Vector Solutions at <https://www.targetolutions.com/ccc> to see the available class dates.

CPR/First Aid Training Saves Lives!

The County trains approximately 500 employees in AED/CPR/First Aid annually. There are several reported cases of County employees saving the lives of their family members, a coworker, or a member of the public. One employee found a coworker unconscious, called 911, performed CPR and she survived. One employee observed a coworker collapse; they performed CPR, used a site AED, and he survived. Another employee reported her child was choking on a piece of food, and because of the skills she learned in the training, she successfully performed the Heimlich and cleared the obstruction from her child's airway!

comes complacency and haste, risk is elevated to a higher likelihood of injury. So, after climbing up and down 20 feet of probably 10 or so ladders, walking on narrow surfaces at different heights for a couple of hours, I was thinking this would be much quicker if I had my phone in my hand while I climbed, snapped some photos, and took some notes, and then made it to the top. My wonderful team, while watchful, were not worried about me as I moved, it seemed as though I knew what I was doing.

One ladder we went up was a very unstable ladder that led to a bridge which was partly constructed; the rest of the bridge was all netting before moving to the other side, to get down the opposite ladder to ground level. We did not enter the bridge, but placed a tag, chain, and lock on the two poles of the bridge entrance. My two co-workers climbed back down the ladder we just came up, yelled clear after each had made it down, and then watched and waited for me to come down last. Half-way down the ladder, I remembered I forgot to take a picture of the locked bridge. I climbed up just enough to see the top, pulled out my phone and snapped a photo of the bridge. Both my team members stopped talking to one another and yelled a reminder to be careful going up there and maintain 3 points of contact; the photos can wait until ground level. As I placed my phone back in my pocket quickly, the wooden ladder began to shake, and I slipped one foot from the rung. I caught myself with both hands while my other foot was firmly planted on the rung. Luckily my co-workers held either side of the ladder legs for some stability and calmly encouraged me down safely.

CAUTION
INSPECT LADDERS
BEFORE EACH USE



Even as safety professionals, we may be put into risky environments to inspect and determine safety before general use; we still need to balance confidence with the same safe practices that we teach. No matter how experienced any of us are, safety professionals or not, mistakes can happen to any of us. Remember to maintain your training and follow safe procedures for ladder use every time, including performing a ladder inspection by a competent person before use. While I have performed many ladder inspections and conducted ladder awareness training many more times, the same goes for me too.

Important Safety Training Dates for March 2022

Required Training in Vector Solutions:

COVID-19

- The County's new course "CCC COVID-19 Safety in the Workplace"
- "COVID-19 Field Safety Training" for staff conducting fieldwork
- TAILGATES
 - CCC - COVID-19 Safety Training
 - CCC - Emergency Evacuation Procedures during COVID-19
- COVID-19 "Reporting Positive Results to Public Health" for Department Personnel Contacts

General Annual Safety Training

- CCC Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) Training
- CCC Protection from Wildfire Smoke for all Employees
- CCC Protection from Wildfire Smoke for Supervisors and Managers (all employee training is a pre-requisite)
- CCC Emergency Evacuation Procedures - All Employees

Department Specific

- CCC HSD 2021 Workplace Violence Training - 2022 coming soon!

Additional Training in Vector Solutions:

- CCC Driver Safety Training - recommended for all County
- CCC Office Ergonomics Awareness Training
 - As needed for all County
 - Required following an ergonomic evaluation
- TAILGATES
 - Workplace violence
 - Shelter in Place Procedures
- **WOSH Training for Safety Coordinators, managers, and supervisors!**

**Hybrid CPR Classes
Available Now!**

**Check Vector Solutions for
Dates and Instructions**



Check the Vector Solutions page periodically for new 2022 Safety Training Dates. New classes, workshops, and dates are being posted!

Log into the Vector Solutions website at
www.targetolutions.com/ccc for the full list of
ONLINE, ZOOM, and HYBRID classes!

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public programs and locations. ADA laws were created to provide people with disabilities equal access and opportunities.

In 2008, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) was signed into law and made significant changes to the definition of “disability.” The changes in the ADAAA apply to all five titles of the ADA (see below).

Contra Costa County has an [ADA policy](#) to make County services, programs, facilities, and activities available to all individuals. Some people may request an accommodation informally over the phone or in person, others may submit a written [Public Access Request Form](#). However the request comes in, the County will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the request.



Title 1: Employment

Helps people with disabilities access the same employment opportunities and benefits available to people without disabilities. Employers must provide reasonable accommodations (modification or adjustment to a job or work environment to enable applicants or employees with disabilities to participate in the application process or perform essential job functions) to qualified applicants or employees.

Title 2: State and Local Government

Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services of public entities. It applies to all state and local governments, their departments and agencies, and any other instrumentalities or special purpose districts of state or local governments.

Title 3: Public Accommodations

Prohibits private places of public accommodation (e.g., hotels, restaurants, movie theaters) from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. Sets minimum standards for accessibility for alterations and new facility construction. Directs businesses to make reasonable modifications to help when serving people with disabilities and taking steps to communicate effectively with customers with vision, hearing, or speech disabilities.

Title 4: Telecommunications

Requires telephone and internet companies to provide a nationwide system of interstate and intrastate telecommunications relay services that allows individuals with hearing and speech disabilities to communicate over the phone. This title also requires closed captioning of federally funded public service announcements.

Title 5: Miscellaneous Provisions

Contains various provisions relating to the ADA as a whole, including its relationship to other laws, state immunity, its impact on insurance providers and benefits, prohibition against retaliation and coercion, illegal use of drugs, and attorney’s fees. This title also provides a list of certain conditions that are not to be considered as disabilities.

Technology and Communication Accommodations

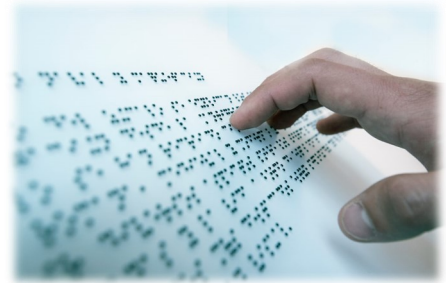
Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act requires reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities in the workplace. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process. Advances in technology help provide people with disabilities with the same access to information as to those without. Examples of technology and communication accommodations include the following:

Accessible and Assistive Technologies

- Ensuring computer software is accessible
- Providing screen reader software
- Using videophones to facilitate communications with colleagues who are deaf
- Providing accessible workstations

Accessible Communications

- Providing sign language interpreters or closed captioning at meetings and events
- Making materials, including training materials, available in Braille or large print



Technology Solutions

Purchase of equipment or changes to existing equipment may be effective accommodations for people with different disabilities. There are many devices that make it possible for people to overcome existing barriers to performing work tasks. These range from very simple solutions, such as an elastic band that can enable a person with cerebral palsy to hold a pencil and write, to 'high-tech' electronic equipment that can be operated by head or mouth movements by people who cannot use their hands. Other types of equipment and devices that may be appropriate include:

- Teletypewriters, telecommunications devices for the deaf, text telephones, or video phones to enable people with hearing and/or speech impairments to communicate via telephone
- Telephone amplifiers for people with hearing impairments
- Special software for standard computers and other equipment to enlarge print or convert documents to spoken words for people with vision and/or reading disabilities
- Telephone headsets, speaker phones, and adaptive light switches for people with manual disabilities
- Talking calculators for people with visual or reading disabilities
- Modified equipment controls for hand and foot operation for a person with limited hand or foot control
- Keyboard armrest and finger guides mounted on keyboards to keep persons with motor control impairments from striking keys in error
- Refreshable Braille displays or Braille printers for blind employees



Ladder Safety Month

March is **National Ladder Safety Month**. Whether you use a ladder at work or at home, gravity is always present. Choosing the correct ladder for the job based on height and weight capacity (Duty Rating) and using it properly every time can prevent serious injuries and even death from a fall. Visit the [American Ladder Institute](http://AmericanLadderInstitute.com) for free training, webinars, and safety resources. Review the County's Ladder Safety Program on the Risk Management intranet site. Read over the Ladder Safety Training Tailgate included in this issue and use it to inspect your ladders for safety each and every time you use them. With all of these resources, you can take your ladder safety to new heights!



Here is the simple calculation for determining the Duty Rating needed for the job at hand:

Your Weight + Weight of Your Clothing and Protective Equipment + Weight of Tools and Supplies Being Used = Duty Rating

Equal Access to County Websites

Accessibility to information for people with disabilities is important!

Do you ever stop to think how you would access information on the internet with a disability that affected your vision? How would you search and identify what you are looking for? The County takes steps to ensure that people that use assistive technology such as Braille readers, screen readers, or tele-typewriter devices, have access to information on County websites.

Through the Office of Communications and Media, each County department has a trained website coordinator to ensure their content is accessible. Some examples include:

- Providing font size and formatting toggles to increase readability.
- Providing closed captioning on all posted videos.
- Making accessibility assistance available by phone through the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY/Voice communication



| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Contrast + | Highlight Links |
| Bigger Text | Text Spacing |
| Pause Animations | Dyslexia Friendly |
| Cursor | Tooltips |
| Line Height | Text Align |
| Saturation | Reset All |
| Move/Hide | |

The County's website is designed to comply with website accessibility standards in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 2.0 A and AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Access Success!

One of the hallmarks of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is accessibility. Any public building can provide access with features such as parking, ramps and signage, and internal configurations of areas such as hallways and restrooms. The following are examples of building accommodations for those with disabilities:



- Ensuring doors open easily with one hand
- Maintaining smooth and even walking surfaces
- Push button door openers
- Ramps
- Adequate lighting
- Clear signage that includes braille

Restroom Accessibility

One of the key aspects of the ADA is equal access to public restrooms. Requirements vary based on single or multiple stall restrooms and may include:

- Grab rails in stall areas
- Door width clearances
- Sink and mirror heights
- Vertical door threshold limits
- Door hardware which is accessible with one hand
- Signage to identify accessible restrooms



Parking Stall and Lot Accessibility

Other ADA requirements include accessible parking stalls for those with disabilities. Examples include signage for designated accessible parking stalls, adjacent no parking zones for clearance, ramp access from the parking lot to walkways, and painted markings on the ground surface to designate areas that must be kept clear for access.



Portable Ladder Safety

Ladders – Avoid Complacency!

Portable ladders are a commonly used piece of equipment in construction and general industry. They are versatile, practical, effective, and used to perform a variety of tasks. With such common use, both at work and home, many people overlook the associated risks. This can cause complacency, leading to many preventable injuries. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports the average number of ladder-related incidents between 2011 to 2019 was 149 worker fatalities and 22,594 non-fatal injuries. One of the greatest risks is falls from height. Before using a portable ladder, assess the work area, condition of the ladder, and the associated fall risks.



Ladder Injuries

Injuries from portable ladders occur for various reasons, many of which are preventable. California’s Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) provides portable ladder regulations (Title 8, California Code of Regulations, Section 3276) to protect workers. Common hazards, such as instability, electrical shock, and falls can be identified and avoided. Safe ladder use requires proper planning, correct ladder selection, safe work procedures, periodic inspections, and proper ladder maintenance. Cal/OSHA reports the following common causes for these types of injuries:

- Inadequate training on ladder safety
- Ladder being in poor condition
- Improper care or use, including incorrect positioning
- Not following safe work practices
- Incorrect ladder for the specific task
- Using defective ladders

Selecting a Ladder

| <u>Ladder Duty Ratings & Maximum Weights</u> | |
|--|------------|
| Type IAA (Extra Heavy Duty) | 375 pounds |
| Type IA (Extra Heavy Duty) | 300 pounds |
| Type I (Heavy Duty) | 250 pounds |
| Type II (Medium Duty) | 225 pounds |
| Type III (Light Duty) | 200 pounds |

Many types of ladders are available, typically constructed of aluminum, fiberglass, or wood. When selecting a ladder, consider the work environment where it will be used. When working with, or near sources of electricity, aluminum ladders must not be used! In these cases, only fiberglass ladders should be used. Inspect the ladder to ensure it is in good condition and labeled, certifying it complies with specifications of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and is listed by Underwriters Laboratories.

A ladder’s Duty Rating must also be considered before use. These ratings indicate the maximum weight a ladder can safely support—the combined weight of the person with their clothing, equipment and materials, and personal protective equipment. Overloading ladders can cause them to fail. Always verify the Duty Rating before use to verify the ladder can support the load safely!

Ladder Inspections

Using damaged ladders can lead to serious injury or even death. Before using a ladder, conduct a thorough inspection to verify it is safe for use. Inspection items include verifying rungs are clean and free from oil, and on A-frame ladders, the spreader (locking) mechanisms function correctly. If deficiencies are identified, Cal/OSHA requires the ladder be tagged out of service and not used until repaired. If repair is not possible, it must be discarded. The checklist to the right provides important ladder inspection items.





| General | Needs repair | O.K. | Date repaired |
|--|--------------|------|---------------|
| Loose steps or rungs (can they be moved at all with the hand)? | | | |
| Loose nails, screws, bolts, or other metal parts? | | | |
| Cracked, spilt, or broken uprights, braces, or rungs? | | | |
| Slivers on uprights, rungs, or steps? | | | |
| Damaged or worn non-slip bases? | | | |
| Step ladders | | | |
| Wobbly (from side strain)? | | | |
| Loose or bent hinges or hinge spreaders? | | | |
| Stop on hinge spreaders broken? | | | |
| Broken, split, or worn steps? | | | |
| Extension ladders | | | |
| Loose, broken, or missing extension locks? | | | |
| Defective locks that do not seat properly while extended? | | | |
| Worn or rotted rope? | | | |

Ladder Do's and Don'ts

After identifying the correct type of ladder and performing a thorough inspection, employees must follow safe work practices and applicable regulations to perform the work safely. Certain general requirements apply to all portable ladders. Depending upon the type (e.g., A-Frame, Single, Extension), additional requirements may also exist. Common regulatory requirements and best practices are provided to the right.

| DO's | DON'TS |
|---|--|
| Verify the ground surface is level and firm | Lean beyond the edges of the rails |
| Maintain 3 points of contact and face the ladder when climbing or descending | Work from the top two steps on a step ladder |
| Ensure extension and single ladders have adequate angle from the base to the structure (4:1 ratio) | Use a metal ladder around electrical hazards |
| Ensure extension and single ladders are secured at the top and extend 3 feet above the accessed surface | Use a folding ladder as an extension ladder |
| Use a tool belt or other means to safely carry materials up/down a ladder | Overload a ladder past its duty rating |
| Verify all locks on extension ladders are secure | Stand on braces or pail shelves on self-supporting ladders |
| Fully open step and A-frame ladders and lock spreader bars | Use ladders on the 'blind sides' of doorways |
| Face the ladder when in use, and when ascending or descending | Stand backwards when using, ascending or descending |

Transporting and Ladder Care

-  Don't drop or throw ladders.
-  When transporting, use side stakes to prevent lateral swing. Tie the ladder down securely. Drive slowly over rough terrain.
-  Store in well-ventilated areas to prevent sagging or warping. Store straight in flat racks or on wall brackets. Store step ladders in the vertical, closed position.
-  Protect wood ladders from moisture, insect damage, excessive heat.

When transporting and storing ladders, take precaution to avoid damaging them. Neglected ladders are more likely to fail. Improper transport and storage can cause connections to loosen and legs to warp, weakening the ladder. During transport, unsecured ladders can become hazards, causing potential injury and property damage. Secure all portable ladders during transport to protect employees and the public.

For more information on Cal/OSHA portable ladder regulations, visit: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/3276.html>. For more information on Ladder Safety, visit: [National Safety Council](#). Sources: Cal/OSHA, BLS, ANSI.

Brain Injury Awareness Month



Did you know there are more than 5.3 million children and adults in the United States (U.S.) who are living with a permanent brain injury-related disability? That's one in every 60 people. In fact, brain injury is a leading cause of death and disability in the U.S., with at least 2.8 million Americans sustaining a traumatic brain injury annually. Each year, The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) leads the nation in observing Brain Injury Awareness Month in March. The theme for the 2021 through 2023

campaign is **#MoreThanMyBrainInjury**. This campaign has been recognized for over 30 years and aims to educate people about the effects that living with brain injury can have on the injured and their families and to raise funds to assist with support for those people affected.



RISK MANAGEMENT
SAFETY AND
LOSS CONTROL

Dedicated to
preventing
injuries and
illnesses.
**CONTACT
US!**

2530 Arnold Drive, Suite 140, Martinez
925-335-1400

Safety Newsletter E-mail:
Norman.Wright@riskm.cccounty.us

Safety and Loss Control Intranet Site:
<https://www.insidecontracosta.org/469/Safety-and-Loss-Control>

How Does Brain Damage Occur?

Brain damage occurs when a person's brain is injured due to traumatic injury, such as a fall or car accident, or nontraumatic injury, such as a stroke. The brain does not fully mend itself the way a cut or other injury does in the body. Recovery and return to function can depend on the cause of the injury and the person's symptoms.

Types and Causes of Brain Injuries

Doctors usually divide brain damage caused by injury into two categories: traumatic and nontraumatic. Traumatic brain injuries occur due to a blow, shaking, or strong rotational injury to the head that damages the brain. A commonly known type of this head injury is concussion. Examples of nontraumatic brain injuries include brain infections/inflammation and stroke, which is caused by a loss of blood flow to the brain due to a blood clot or brain bleed.

Brain Injury Symptoms

The brain is a complex organ and each portion has different functions. The damaged area can determine a person's symptoms. Brain swelling that affects the brain as a whole can also cause different symptoms. Some general symptoms associated with brain injury include affected balance, blurred vision, confusion, difficulty speaking clearly, headache, memory problems, and seizures.

Join the **#MoreThanMyBrainInjury** campaign and help educate others about what it's like to live with a brain injury. Join the BIAA in:

- Increasing understanding of brain injury as a chronic condition
- Reducing the stigma associated with having a brain injury
- Showcasing the diversity of injury and the demographics of the community
- Improving care and support for individuals with brain injury and their families



For additional information on Brain Injury Awareness Month, visit:
<https://www.biausa.org/public-affairs/public-awareness/brain-injury-awareness>