

# Property Owners Need To Think About Fall Protection Systems

Injuries from home maintenance tasks are increasing in residential properties, home owners need to start thinking about installing fall protection systems.

Falls from height remain the most common cause of workplace fatality, but homeowners are continuing to neglect safety standards while working at heights on their properties. Every year as the summer months approach homeowners are more involved in home maintenance tasks outdoors. Gutter cleaning, roof maintenance and window cleaning are some of the most common routine tasks performed at heights. Additionally, large numbers of the community start installing temporary Christmas lighting systems. The increase of property owners who are not trained at working at heights and who do not have the necessary safety equipment, results in an increase in fall related injuries. Registered Nurse Karen Taurima from Brisbane's Princess Alexandra hospital has already noticed an increase of falls from roofs this summer. The Princess Alexandra Hospital has already had 20 individuals injured from ladder falls admitted to the emergency room. Installing Christmas decorations has been the leading cause of injury. Individuals up to the age of 83 have been hospitalized because of using unsafe ladder techniques to install decorations.

The risk is increased because of recent findings from the University of Sydney. Professor of Emergency Medicine Brian Burns said statistics showed men were dying from head injuries received in falls, due to common prescription medicines designed to thin blood and prevent stroke. There is a large percentage of the community that is on blood thinning medication such as Clopidogrel, Warfarin, and Pradaxa. The risk is that when an individual falls from height doing something as simple as gutter cleaning, emergency services will not be able to stop the bleeding. The latest research by Dr Burns has revealed that because of the natural aging process, cranial veins are less able to deal with the trauma of a fall, even from just one meter and can result in subdural hemorrhage. Dr Burns recommends "if you absolutely have to do these maintenance jobs, always make sure you are never alone at home and someone is standing with you holding the ladder".

Sydney Anchor Points are encouraging homeowners to install fall protection systems on their properties to ensure their safety while working at heights. Anchor points can be permanently or temporarily installed on residential properties, and act as a fall restraint system to prevent injury or death. Ladder brackets are a simple way to reduce the chance of falling when using a ladder to access a roof. A ladder bracket locks a ladder in place preventing any slipping or horizontal movement of the ladder. This is an excellent way of allowing safe access to a roof, with minimal expense and hassle. When you consider the amount of money that you can save from cleaning your own gutters, and inspecting your roof and performing minor roof repairs yourself, it can be easily justified that the price of installing a safe roof access point is well worthwhile.

Sydney Anchor Points are now offering their services to the Greater Sydney region. For more advice on fall protection systems and what options are available, Sydney Anchor Points have released a new website with helpful advice and suggestions.

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