

Thank you for volunteering your time and energy to work with Rebuilding Together!

In order to make today's event a success, there are a few safety items that are important to remember, whether you are a seasoned professional or a first-time volunteer. Please take a moment to review these important reminders.

Volunteer Waivers

- Make sure you read and understand the volunteer waiver form. Any questions should be directed to the House Captain or Safety Coordinator.
- Should an accident take place on the worksite, notify the House Captain/Safety Coordinator immediately.

Jobsite Security

- Store valuables in your car or other secure location.
- Familiarize yourself with the worksite leadership and report any strange activities or individuals to the appropriate person immediately.
- Return tools/materials to designated location.
- Label your personal items, including tools, gloves, anything you would like returned to you at the end of the day.

General Housekeeping

- It is everyone's responsibility to pick up trash, debris and materials.
- Clean all spills appropriately immediately after they occur to avoid slips.
- Vacuum/sweep work area when finished with project to gather stray materials and debris.
- If an item is broken or damaged beyond repair, consult with house captain/homeowner and discard when possible to avoid future hazards.
- Provide air circulation throughout home, especially in areas that have come into contact with paint, sawdust, or other materials that could be hazardous when inhaled.

Slips & Falls

- Inspect walking/working surfaces to make sure they are as clean and dry as possible.
- Announce locations or post signs in wet, icy, greasy or otherwise slippery areas.
- Clean up work materials when finished to avoid creating tripping hazards.
- Unplug extension cords and/or keep a clear pathway through a work area at all times.
- Inspect ladders and step stools to ensure that they are in good working order.

- Do not compromise your safety while on a roof or other high area by reaching, leaning, or otherwise being without sure footing.

Ladder Safety

- Inspect each ladder before you use it to make sure it is clean and undamaged.
- Set up a ladder on dry, stable ground.
- Position so that the feet of the ladder are approximately one foot from the base of the building for every four feet of the building's height.
- If there's any chance the ladder's feet will slip, dig a small trench for the feet or secure them another way.
- Extend the top of the ladder three feet above the top of the roof, or whatever surface you have it leaning against.
- Tie off the ladder to prevent it from slipping.
- Face the ladder when you are climbing and keep both hands on the ladder.
- Do not stretch or reach while on the ladder – come down and move the ladder to the desired location.
- Have someone hold the base of the ladder for you as you descend. If someone else is descending without support, assist them.

Material Handling

- Remember proper lifting techniques (bend at the knees, grab an object securely, hold it close to the body).
- Be cognizant of your health and ability to handle heavy objects/labor intensive or strenuous tasks – do not take on more than you are physically able to handle.
- When transporting heavy/awkward objects, confirm that your pathway is clear of debris and safe to walk on.
- Keep an eye on both ends of long objects like wood beams, ladders, and railings – do not back up with object in hand without checking for obstacles such as windows, breakables, ladders, or people.
- Avoid throwing items into dumpsters/onto ground, as many items can shatter.

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Material Handling *continued*

- Handle trash carefully to avoid lacerations from glass or contact with other unsafe items within the bag.
- Wear gloves! They can help avoid splinters, help provide traction, and protect against cuts.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Review PPE needs for each task.
- For any job that requires specific types of PPE, make sure you receive the proper materials and any necessary instruction on how to use the equipment.
- Replace your PPE if its effectiveness is compromised.
- Be sure to discard your PPE appropriately, remembering that any hazardous material you might have encountered could also be on the equipment.

Hazardous Materials

- Be aware of materials you are working with – if they are hazardous, be sure to receive instruction on what to do in the event of a mishap.
- Keep materials in proper containers and make sure that the materials are labeled.
- Wear gloves, masks or other PPE as appropriate.
- Confirm that MSDSs are available on the work site.
- Confirm appropriate manner for discarding material – many materials require special disposal and should not be flushed down sinks, poured into the ground, or thrown in the trash.
- Thoroughly wash hands and work area after handling hazardous materials, even if you are using PPE. There is still the danger of transporting the material to your eyes, mouth, or someone else unless everything is cleaned.

Electrical Safety

- Inspect tools to make sure they have guards, grounding prongs, and are undamaged.
- Do not use power tools that you do not know how to operate.
- Inspect extension cords to make sure they are undamaged and are three-pronged.
- Make sure the power is turned off before working on lighting or other wiring projects.
- Watch for overhead power lines when working outside.

Power Tool Safety

- Receive instruction prior to using a tool you do not know how to operate.
- Confirm that cord does not pose a tripping or electrical hazard.
- Stay focused on task at hand - do not become distracted.
- Be aware of environmental hazards (do not shoot nails in wood when there are volunteers behind wood beam, check walls for wiring/plumbing before contact, do not operate anything electrical in the rain, etc.)
- Avoid wearing loose fitting clothes that could get caught in the tool.
- Most accidents occur after the tool has been used and is in “wind-down” mode – continue to use caution around the tool during this period.

- Do not use cords to hoist or lower tools.
- Make sure the tool is in the OFF position before plugging in the cord, passing to another worker, or setting the tool on the ground.

Fire Prevention

- Do not smoke on a work site.
- Be aware of the nearest fire extinguishers on site and ask for training if you don’t know how to use one.
- When using gas-powered equipment, let engines or motors cool before refueling.
- Turn off the electricity and gas before starting any major construction projects.

Water Damage Prevention

- Do not attempt a plumbing job if you are not experienced.
- Do not expose a building’s interior or homeowner’s belongings to inclement weather.
- Clean up spills immediately after they occur.
- Turn off water before working on any plumbing job.
- Locate water pipes before beginning major construction (doorway widening, replacing dry wall, installing fixtures or grab bars, replacing appliances, etc.)

Environmental Awareness

- Be aware of the condition of the floor, steps, or other materials you are putting weight on.
- Be cognizant of traffic or other neighborhood hazards.
- Do not bring children or pets onto a worksite.
- When outside, check for plants such as poison ivy/oak, thorns, or other items that might cause an allergic reaction (bees, pollens, etc.)
- Watch for tripping hazards both inside and out, including pipes, loose bricks, roots, extension cords, hoses, throw rugs, and uneven ground.
- Confirm that your task does not affect the property/grounds of a neighbor.
- Use caution when entering/leaving work area in a motor vehicle – check for other cars and people, as well as tools, lumber, or other worksite material that might be in the way.
- When removing tree limbs or beams overhead, be sure to check what is below and could be damaged by falling materials.
- Many accidents happen while someone is angry or distracted. Stay cool and focus on the job at hand. If you think someone might not be in the right mindset to handle their assigned task, take action – offer to take over or talk with the house captain.
- When scraping or removing paint, confirm that the paint is lead-free. If not, determine whether it is safe to continue the project. Ask for safety guidelines from House Captain.
- Check out your shoes – are they appropriate for the work you’ve been assigned? Consider the sole thickness and tread before entering job site.