



MEDIA RELEASE

Emergency Medical Services

Ohio Emergency Medical Services • Jeffrey A. Learning, Executive Director
www.ems.ohio.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 7, 2011

Contact: China Dodley, Public Information Officer
(614) 466-2551

Division of EMS Offers Safety Tips during Holidays

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Public Safety’s Division of Emergency Medical Services reminds Ohioans that an estimated 5,800 people--two to three every hour--, are treated in emergency departments, each holiday season for fall-related injuries sustained while decorating during each holiday seasons.

“EMS personnel are prepared to respond to emergencies during the holiday however, most people can prevent holiday-related injuries by taking special precautions,” said Ohio EMS Executive Director Jeffrey Learning. “It’s important to pay close attention to children and the elderly since they are more prone to being seriously injured during a fall.”

According to the Home Safety Council, falls are the leading cause of unintentional injuries and death in the U.S. The two highest risk age groups are children younger than 5 and older than 70. Last year, 53 percent of the injuries reported to the Ohio Trauma Registry were caused by falls.

The Division of EMS offers the following injury prevention tips:

- Exercise extreme caution when decorating your Christmas tree. Do not stand on a couch or a table to put up other decorations. Instead, always use a step stool to decrease the chance of falling or slipping.
- Keep under-foot clutter to a minimum by collecting presents under the tree, clearing stairs, replacing slippery scatter rugs and providing storage boxes for discarded toys.
- Before using a ladder outdoors to hang holiday lights, choose a location that is well away from all power lines. Coming in contact with live wires can be fatal.
- Ladders should be placed on level ground and opened completely, making sure all locks are engaged.
- Remember to take extra precaution when walking on snowy, icy, walkways.

###

The Ohio Department of Public Safety, through the Division of EMS, oversees the certification of emergency medical technicians and firefighters and ensures that the professionals in these lifesaving roles are properly trained, educated and prepared for emergency situations.