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To: Paul L'Huillier Ian Howley secretary@mountbeautymensshed.org.au

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## STEPPING UP LADDER SAFETY

***A simple, but important reminder for all shedders, take extra care with ladders***

Shedders and their families are being urged to put their safety first when using ladders for odd jobs, taking down Christmas decorations and DIY maintenance around the home, as part of an awareness campaign being launched today.

Run annually, ***The Ladder Safety Matters campaign*** extends across social and digital, with the aim to reduce serious injury, hospitalisations and deaths from ladder falls.

Ladders are associated with more deaths and injuries than any other household product, with older people most likely to suffer serious injuries from a ladder fall.

In Victoria alone, there is around 1200 emergency department presentations due to ladder falls and around six Victorians die as a result of falling from a ladder at home each year.

The latest data shows hospital admissions for ladder falls around the home have gone up by 22 per cent over the five years to 2018/19 – from 614 to 752. The number of men hospitalised increased by 16 per cent from 474 to 549 and concerning the number of women jumped by 45 per cent – from 140 to 203.

Sixty-one per cent of all hospital admissions were people aged 60 and over, and men aged from 40 to 79 made up more than half (55 per cent) of the people who presented to hospital emergency departments after falling off a ladder.

People who are hospitalised after a ladder fall commonly suffer bone fractures, open wounds and head injuries, including concussion. Physical injury is often linked to long-term psychological trauma, loss of mobility and independence for older people.

Most ladder injuries are preventable, which is why older Victorians should be cautious and not take shortcuts. People should always maintain three points of contact, use two hands when climbing and when using a tool, make sure both feet and your other hand are secure on the ladder.

***It is important to work within your limits and make sure another person is at home***

***while you are on a ladder, in case you need help. Having another person around can help hold the ladder to ensure it doesn't slip, simple, but very important.***

**From the Minister for Health Martin Foley**

*"After the year that's been, staying safe at home is even more important. If you're an older Victorian, particularly those in their sixties and beyond and those living alone – you should think twice before you go up a ladder."*

*"It may seem like a small risk to take but the consequences can be deadly. It's just not worth it. Put yourself and your family first – when using a ladder, make safety matter."*

**From the Deputy Director Alfred Emergency & Trauma centre Dr Carl Luckhoff**

*"The data shows just how serious a fall from a ladder can be and it should be a reminder for older Victorians to stop and think before doing something risky on a ladder."*

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