

## The Ergonomics of Reaching Overhead

Certain work responsibilities may require us to reach overhead, which can stress our necks and shoulders. This can result in muscle and joint injuries. To prevent injury and strain, follow these ergonomic guidelines when reaching overhead:

**Lighten the load.** If you have to lift or lower a load from above, lighten it if possible.

**Change the process.** Work overhead for shorter periods of time and use work methods that are less labor intensive and that will help you spend less time reaching overhead.

**Use tools and equipment that can help you,** such as drill bit or screwdriver extensions. Or use a sturdy platform or an aerial lift to decrease vertical distance.



**Preassemble fixtures** or whatever you are fitting before installing them to minimize time spent working overhead.

**Consider working in teams.** One person can lift while the other assembles. Rotate the tasks until the job is complete.

**Take regular and frequent breaks** to give muscles time to relax.

## Preventing Ice Dams

When snow and ice buildup at the edge of a roof, it prevents melting snow from draining, causing an ice dam. This buildup of water and moisture cannot only lead to roof damage, but also moisture, mildew and mold buildup inside your home, which can have adverse health effects. Here are three ways to help prevent ice dams:



- 1 Hire an energy professional** to access the heat loss from your home (nonuniform roof temperatures can lead to ice dams).
- 2 Remove snow from the roof with a roof rake** — do not attempt to dislodge large icicles. **Caution:** If you cannot reach the roof from the ground with the roof rake, do not get on the roof; hire a professional.
- 3 Seal all air leaks in the ceiling** and install insulation to make it airtight between the house and attic.

If you discover an ice dam on your roof, have it removed by a professional. And check for mold or mildew that may have formed in your home.

## December is Safe Toys & Gifts Month.



## ANNUAL Safe Gift Guide

This year, the world has seemed to focus on safety more than ever, so giving the gift of safety is one that many may choose. Here are some ideas:

### For the health-conscious fashion buff:

**Designer and fashion masks.** Who says you can't look good while staying safe? There's a wide selection of masks out there for every taste and age.

**Sun-safe clothing.** Buying for a gardener or a person who spends a lot of time outdoors? Consider purchasing SPF-infused clothing. There are options that are lightweight, moisture wicking and breathable at various prices.

### For the online shopper:

**Safe delivery boxes.** There are many size and tamper-resistant options available for package deliveries to prevent front porch or apartment hallway theft.

**Smart doorbells.** Many will appreciate doorbells that allow them to see when deliveries are made as well as who is outside their doors.

### For the athlete:

**Reflective running gear.** Walkers and runners will appreciate reflective gear, especially if they need to run before sunrise or after sunset.

**Running lights.** Select from models for early morning or evening runners and hikers that can be worn on the head, arm, ankle or even on bike helmets.

**LED bike lights.** These products attach to handlebars or wheels.

# 7 WAYS to Prepare Babysitters for Emergencies

Whether you're hiring a babysitter when you plan to go back to work or just for a night out, here are seven important ways to prepare them for emergencies:

- 1. Write down your address and phone number.** Don't assume your babysitters know these by heart. Place this in a prominent place or ask babysitters to add the information to their phone contacts.
- 2. Write down all other important phone numbers,** including your neighbors, health care providers, close friends and relatives, hospital, fire department and poison control center. Place this near a landline or in a prominent place.
- 3. Provide babysitters with pertinent medical information about your child:** any health issues and how to deal with them, medications and how to administer them, as well as food and medication allergies.
- 4. Instruct babysitters not to take photos** of your children and post them on social media.
- 5. Show your sitters where you keep fire extinguishers,** first aid kits and flashlights. Show them where all emergency exit and escape routes are located, including a safe room for weather events.
- 6. Share all rules regarding swimming pools and play equipment.** If you have a pool, make sure your babysitter is trained in lifesaving, can recognize the signs of drowning and knows to never leave your child alone near the water.
- 7. Ask your babysitters to not answer the door** while you are away from the house.



## Wood Stove Safety

**Wood stoves can be an efficient and affordable way to heat your home;** however, they also have some safety hazards. For example, some wood-burning appliances can emit smoke that contains harmful chemical compounds. This can contribute to indoor air pollution and result in adverse health effects. If you own or are considering purchasing a wood stove, follow this advice:

- ➔ Contact your local building codes department, state energy or environmental agency about wood-burning regulations in your area.
- ➔ Purchase a unit that has been evaluated and listed with a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- ➔ Read and follow the manufacturer's directions.
- ➔ Check clearance requirements. If there are no instructions, use the National Fire Protection Agency's recommendation of 36 feet away from any combustible item, such as curtains.
- ➔ Install a fireproof floor protector in the size recommended by the manufacturer or one that extends 18 inches on all sides of the heater.
- ➔ Get your stovepipe and chimney inspected and cleaned annually.
- ➔ Burn only seasoned hardwood or wood pellets in the stove.
- ➔ Transfer cooled ashes using a covered metal container to an outside location at least ten feet away from your home. Soak with water.



## SAFETY CORNER

### Tips for Elderly Drivers

As we age, our driving abilities may be affected. That's one reason why it's important to have an annual checkup with your health care provider.



**Older Driver Safety Awareness Week is December 7 to 11.**

**Other things to consider:**

**Check your state requirements about license renewal,** as they vary by state. For example, California requires drivers 70 and older to take an in-person vision and written test before renewing their licenses.

**Discuss medications with your health care provider** if you experience side effects that could interfere with your ability to drive safely.

**Get your eyes checked** annually.

**Identify transportation resources.** Changes can happen more rapidly in some people than in others. Identify community or volunteer organizations that can help with transport so you can avoid disrupting your routines.

**Plan your route** before you head out.

**Get a driving fitness evaluation** from a qualified occupational therapist, especially if you experience age-related physical challenges.

**Consider moving to a walkable community** where grocery, pharmacy, restaurants and places of worship are within easy walking distance.

**Attend a CarFit event near you.** CarFit volunteers will use a 12-point checklist to make sure your vehicle is safe and adjusted properly for the best fit for you. Learn more at [car-fit.org](http://car-fit.org).



The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Say Goodbye to Food Cravings**, is at [personalbest.com/extras/20V12tools](http://personalbest.com/extras/20V12tools).

12.2020