

News release

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BIG BROTHER'S STAR BUILDER 'STEPS UP' TO PROMOTE LADDER SAFETY

Professional builder and Big Brother star Craig Phillips says 'safety' is key when working with ladders.

The construction entrepreneur and winner of the first series of the reality show today gave his support to the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) ladder safety campaign for 2009.

The campaign centres around a 'ladder exchange' which gives everyone the opportunity to get rid of old, damaged and broken ladders and trade them for new ones.

Over 5000 ladders have been exchanged under this scheme since it first launched in 2007.

Craig, currently on ITV1's 60 Minute Makeover is well aware health and safety at every level is important, he says "To be a winner in the construction industry you have to take health and safety seriously.

"If you take a chance with dodgy ladders you are risking your life. Every month over 100 people fall off a ladder at work and suffer serious injuries. So many of these accidents are avoidable and having safe equipment makes a huge difference. That's why I think the ladder exchange is such a great idea"

"It's great that my home city of Liverpool has been chosen as the venue to launch this national campaign. I hope companies not just here, but in every city and town in the UK will be able to trade in old ladders for new safer ones."

In 2007/08 a total of 58 workers died and over 3600 employees suffered major injury as a result of a fall from height in the workplace. Many of these incidents could be avoided by using the right equipment and taking simple precautions. HSE is working in close partnership with industry to ensure that anyone involved in working at height uses the right equipment for the job and uses it safely.

Peter Brown HSE Head of Work Environment, Gas and Radiation and Gas Division said:

"Over the next few months, businesses will get the chance to get their ladders checked and, where necessary, trade them in for new ones at a heavily discounted price. HSE is working with Local Authorities, ladder manufacturers and retailers to

address the safety issues around access equipment with employers and ladder users.

“We want anyone working at height to use the right ladder for the job and to use it safely. Ladder Exchange is the perfect opportunity for businesses to assess the risks involved in using ladders and to adopt sensible health and safety measures.”

The ladder exchange programme is one part of HSE’s ongoing Shattered Lives campaign which aims to reduce the number of fatal and major injuries each year that result from falling from a height.

Don Aers, Chairman of the Ladder Association said:

“Over two million people work on ladders daily in the UK and we want all of those workers to work safely. We enthusiastically support the Ladder Exchange because it’s an initiative, alongside training, that can really make a difference.”

When it comes to ladder safety, always ask yourself three simple questions:

- Do you need a ladder or should you use something different?
- Is it the right ladder?
- Are you using the ladder safely?

The exchange discount can be up to 50 per cent off and ladders can be exchanged at any of the partner retail outlets.

For more information please visit HSE website <http://www.hse.gov.uk/shatteredlives>

Notes to Editors

1. The aim of Ladder Exchange is to increase general awareness of the risks involved in ladder use and promote sensible health and safety.
2. The Work at Height Regulations 2005 came into force on 6 April 2005. The Regulations introduce a hierarchy for use when planning and risk assessing work at height. Duty holders should consider how to avoid work at height. If this is not possible, they should take steps to prevent a fall occurring. Where they cannot prevent a fall, they should take steps to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall.
3. A ladder should only be used where a risk assessment demonstrates that the task is low risk and of short duration, or where there are existing features on site that cannot be altered and the use of other equipment is not practical. Such features include restricted space preventing other equipment from being put in place correctly or ground conditions that mean that there is no suitable area to set up alternative equipment.
4. HSE has published a brief guide to the Work at Height Regulations 2005 at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf
5. HSE has published the following guidance specifically for employers and workers who use ladders:
Safe use of ladder and stepladders – an employers guide at

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg402.pdf

Top tips for ladder safety at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg405.pdf

6. Craig Phillips: As well as appearing on over 800 construction and DIY TV programmes Craig now runs his own private property development company with 30 properties in his portfolio, prior to Big Brother he ran his own successful building company throughout the 1990's with 30 employees working at any one time for him, he has been in the building industry since he was an apprentice 20 years ago. www.craigphillips.co.uk
7. Ladder Exchange partners are as follows: ABRU, Clow Group, Globe Ladders Ltd, HSS Hire, The Ladder Association, LadderStore.com, Ladder & Fencing Industries (Newent) Ltd, SGB, Speedy Hire, TB Davies, Youngman Group, Zarges
8. Photograph Left to right – Don Aers, Ladder Association Chairman, Craig Phillips, Celebrity Builder, Peter Brown, HSE Head of Work Environment, Gas and Radiation and Gas Division

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