



Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety



Safe Spring Cleaning

March 2006

As the warm weather approaches, many people will begin household spring-cleaning chores. Falls and poisonings are the two leading causes of home injury in America. The following guidelines will help keep your family safe at home while performing spring clean-up activities:

- Use a step ladder or step stool to place or retrieve items on shelves. When using a



step ladder never stand higher than the second step from the top and for an extension ladder never stand higher than the fourth rung from the top. Before using any ladder, inspect the ladder to ensure it is not damaged, that it is the appropriate height for the task and that it is securely placed on a level dry surface.

- Keep stairs, floors, and landings dry and free of obstructions or impediments.
- When lifting heavy items, always use proper lifting



WRONG!

RIGHT!

techniques. Always use your legs when you lift. Make sure that your path is clear and that you can safely see over the load.

- Always follow manufacturers directions when using cleaning products, including the proper use of personal protective equipment such as gloves and protective eyewear. Never mix cleaning products together because their contents could react and create harmful gases.
- Keep cleaning chemicals out of children's reach.

- Never leave large buckets of standing water unattended. They present a serious drowning danger to young children.



- Do not use gasoline as a cleaning solvent and never store gasoline in your home. Gasoline vapors can readily ignite. Gasoline should only be used as a fuel.
- Dispose of household hazardous waste, including paints, pesticides and solvents through your local or county household hazardous waste program.

