

Winter Safety Reminders

If all the talk is correct, this winter could be a snowy one. In fact, you may have already had a taste of winter a few weeks ago. A daily paper in my area ran a graph showing winter snowfall for the last 50 years. The recent years have been well below normal. So this year may be the one to change the trend.

If it is, you need to be prepared. Winter activities can be fun, but don't forget safety. These precautions are particularly important if you have family or guests who are enjoying winter outdoor activities on your property.

Over half of all heat produced by the body is lost through the uncovered head and neck. (So mothers are right to say, "Wear a hat!") If you or your children go

outside, wrap up in a scarf and hat. If you have teenagers, see if you can work out a compromise. For girls, wide fabric headbands may be an acceptable way to avoid frostbitten ears. Don't forget, in their eyes, a fashionable hair style is more important than good health.

Everyone can practice layering clothes for warmth. In fact, you will be warmer wearing a longsleeved shirt and a bulky knit sweater than wearing a heavy jacket. Layering provides insulation and helps protect a person from hypothermia. Hypothermia occurs when a person's body loses heat faster than it can replace it, causing the internal body temperature to drop dangerously low. This is particularly important for-seniors who may be more susceptible to

hypothermia than younger family members. Some medications may heighten a person's vulnerability to hypothermia. Ask your doctor if this concern applies to you. Wrist watches, tight pieces of jewelry, and tight shoes or boots may reduce the flow of warm blood to your hands and feet. Are you aware that hypothermia can occur in mild indoor climates? Any time you feel chilly, slip on another layer of clothes as a precaution.

Because water cools a person 25 to 30 times faster than exposure to air of the same temperature, people who fall into water must concentrate on quickly getting warm. Remember this if you are ice skating or wandering near a stream.

Hypothermia is only one of many winter safety issues. Another concerns sledding. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 50,000 people receive emergency room treatment annually for injuries related to sleds, toboggans and snow disks. Accidents occur when old sleds splinter, when steering mechanisms fail, and when icy conditions make it difficult to control the sled's speed and direction. Unfortunately children often plow blindly through new snow into hidden

rocks and tree stumps. Concussions and other serious injuries result.

To help prevent these injuries. teach children to roll sideways off a sled to lessen the chance of injury in a collision. Also sand rough edges and wax runners for smooth, controllable operation. Avoid roads and fence lines.

If you plan to retreat to a warm home and blazing fire after your outdoor fun, make this important safety check. Have your chimney inspected for creosote build-up. Creosote can clog the chimney and may ignite. Perhaps you know families who have suffered great loss due to chimney fires. It is possible to inspect the chimney with a mirror and to clean it if you have

> Wintertime Doesn't Spell End To Landis Valley Farm Work

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) - Ask any farmre and he'll tell you that even in winter there's plenty to do around a farm. Landis Valley Museum's Historic Farm Project is no exception. There's plent to do this winter.

The museum is looking for individuals or families to lend a hand to help accomplish this work. There are many opportunities for interested youth and adult volunteers to assist the museum

the proper tools. But if you are unsure, this is one time that is worth paying someone to do the job well.

If all the hustle and bustle of the last few weeks has worn you out, I suggest that you to put off the plans for outdoor activities for a day or two and curl up under a warm afghan, sip a mug of hot chocolate and read a good book. Yes, it's refreshing to get outside. It's important to follow good winter safety practices. But it is also healthy to relax and enjoy a quiet moment indoors once in awhile, too.

Rebecca Escott is a Home Economist with Penn State **Cooperative Extension in** Lehigh County.

from routine farm and livestock maintenance, to special construction, restoration, landscaping and research projects. Volunteers also have the opportunity to learn interpretive skills and interact with visitors from the unique standpoint of living history during many of the museum's special events.

A strong back and a wiilingness to work outdoors are helpful, although not required, to join this ever-growing part of the Landis Valley Museum family.

Contact: Steve Miller - Curator of Agricultural History or Jeff Powell - Museum Farm Project Coordinator

Phone: (717) 569-0401 or (717) 299-7586 Mon - Fri

Hours: Starting Thursday 12:30 4:30 pm (flexible after orientation)

Minimum Hours: 4 hours weekly



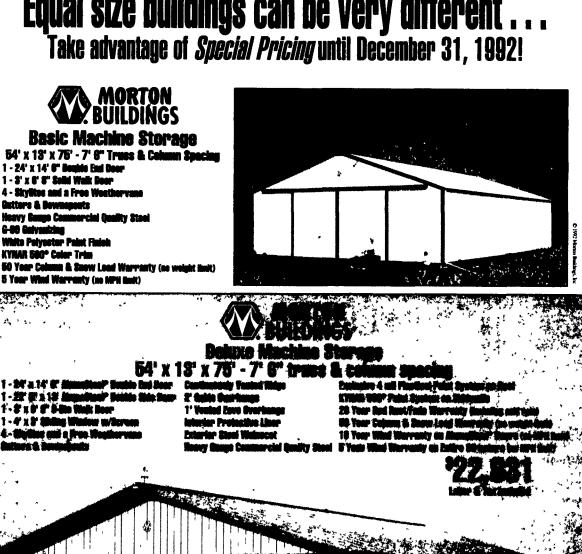
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