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The PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANER



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Raising the Bar on Safety



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Committed to Residential & Route Safety

By Ron Friman, Expert Window Cleaner

After an exciting Penn and Teller magic show during the International Window Cleaning Association (IWCA) convention a few years ago in Las Vegas, Ron Friman was inspired to take a similar approach with a residential know-how class he was asked to teach at the last minute. Since this would be his first class as a teacher, he excitedly called upon Manny Ochsenreiter, friend and owner of a window cleaner supply house in Seattle. Manny demonstrated the window cleaning techniques while Ron explained what he was doing.

Years later, Friman is still teaching safety classes, which cover all aspects of residential and route safety for the IWCA. "I take teaching safety seri-

ously," Friman asserts. "People tell me that I am able to tell a story – this is how I teach the class. I have three hours to capture your attention," he says. For instance, he tells the story of how his company went from a dangerous workplace to one that has not had an accident for eight years. "Knock on wood," he added. "Actually, seven years ago, one of our workers was stung by a bee and had to go to the emergency room."

Ron uses pictures in the PowerPoint presentation to visually show actual safe and unsafe practices during the Residential & Route Safety class. "These pictures say a thousand words," he declared. For instance, a picture of a window cleaner standing on top of a

six foot stepladder was shown. "This of course, is an unsafe act," Ron confirmed. When this particular window cleaner was asked why he did this unsafe act, his answer was because he did not want to go back to his truck to get the appropriate ladder and waste any more time. "No one wakes up in the morning and says, I think I am going to injure myself today. But with this window cleaner's action, he is risking injury to himself. Never compromise safety so you can finish five to 10 minutes earlier," Friman affirmed.

Over the years, the IWCA Safety Director, Stefan Bright, who coordinates the organization's safety program, has etched into Ron's mind to think and plan ahead for safety at all times.



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"The key to teaching safety is to observe, point out, and correct your window cleaners' hazardous and any possible detrimental actions," Ron stated. For example, if a window cleaner is using a water-fed pole next to a high voltage electric wire, he should be stopped right away before possibly electrocuting himself. It is this kind of behavior that must be changed if you are to have a safe workplace.

The IWCA asks a local member company, wherever the safety class is held, to bring in equipment that the window cleaners use during their regular workday, such as ladders, poles, and other tools and safety devices. With these tools, Friman is able to demonstrate how to safely use most of the tools that the residential and route window cleaners use on a daily basis. /

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The International Window Cleaning Association (IWCA) is a non-profit trade association committed to raising the standards of professionalism within the window cleaning industry.

The primary goal of the organization is to advance the interests and concerns of its members. The IWCA promotes a highly professional, responsible image of the window cleaning professional.

Safety is a major concern of the IWCA. Safety seminars and training programs are regularly offered by the IWCA through out the country.

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