Using Tools and Equipment to Prevent Strains – School Safety Fatality File



School Custodian’s Death Underscores Importance of Equipment in Preventing Strains

Rodrigo Ospina, a 68-year-old night custodian at TeWinkle Intermediate School in Costa Mesa, California, tragically lost his life while performing routine duties at the school. He was attempting to access a high area using a 6-foot ladder when he fell, suffering fatal blunt-force head injuries. He was rushed to Orange County Global Medical Center but was pronounced dead shortly after arrival.

Although not directly a result of lifting, this fatality illustrates a broader issue in school environments: the lack of proper equipment and protocols to prevent strain and injury. Tasks that require reaching, lifting, or carrying heavy loads—often handled manually—can pose significant risks without proper tools like ergonomic carts, adjustable ladders, or lift-assist devices.

Rodrigo Ospina’s death serves as a stark reminder that even routine tasks in schools can become deadly without the right equipment and training. Prioritizing the use of proper tools to reduce physical strain is not just a best practice – it’s a critical aspect of workplace safety in educational settings.

Source: *Latimes.com*