

Cross safety concerns off your holiday shopping list

(ARA) - The holiday season is upon us once again, which means many will soon head to malls and shopping centers across the country. With all the excitement surrounding this busy time of year, the last thing you should worry about is escalator and elevator safety while browsing your neighborhood stores.

Elevators and escalators are safer today than ever before. This is thanks in large part to industry organizations like the National Elevator Industry, Inc. (NEII), which develop and promote updated safety codes, encourage the adaptation of the latest safety technologies, and help educate the public on safe riding practices.

Even with continuous safety advancements, it's beneficial to take precautions and keep elevator and escalator safety tips in mind. Most accidents can be easily prevented.

Below are some guidelines to help keep you and your family safe during the holiday shopping season and any time throughout the year:

When boarding and riding elevators:

- * Watch your step - the elevator car may not be perfectly level with the floor.
- * Stand clear of the doors - keep clothes and carry-ons away from the opening.
- * Hold children and pets firmly.
- * Passengers nearest the doors should exit first when the doors open.
- * Push and hold the "door open" button if doors need to be held open, or ask someone to push the button for you.
- * Never try to stop a closing door with your hands, wait for the next car.
- * Once on board, quickly press the button for your floor and move to the back of the car to make room for other passengers.
- * If the doors do not open when the elevator stops, push the "door open" button.

When exiting elevators:

- * Exit immediately at your floor. Do not wait for others behind you.
- * Do not push the people in front of you when exiting.
- * Watch your step - the elevator car may not be perfectly level with the floor.

In the event of an emergency, all elevators have many safety devices, one of which is brakes that will stop the car if it is not operating properly. If the elevator should ever stop between floors, do not panic. Follow these guidelines:

- * Never climb out of a stalled elevator.
- * Use the "alarm" or "help" button to call for assistance or the car's telephone if available.
- * Above all, wait for help to arrive and never try to leave an elevator that has stopped between floors.
- * Emergency lighting will come on in the event of a power failure.

When entering escalators:

- * Watch the direction of the moving step and step on and off with extra care.
- * Hold children firmly with one arm or hold a child's free hand.
- * Always leave one hand available to grasp the handrail as you step onto the moving step.
- * Never walk in the opposite direction of the escalator.
- * Do not take wheelchairs, electric scooters, strollers, hand carts, luggage carts or similar items on the escalator.

When riding and exiting escalators:

- * Keep loose clothing clear of steps and stand clear of the sides of the escalator.
- * Wear closed-toed and hard-soled shoes, and avoid wearing footwear made of soft-resin or other rubbery materials.
- * Face forward and hold handrail for the entire ride.
- * Don't rest any items or parcels on the handrail or lean against the sides.

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Quick Read:

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Elevator safety tips

When boarding and riding elevators:

- * Watch your step - the elevator car may not be perfectly level with the floor.
- * Stand clear of the doors - keep clothes and carry-ons away from the opening.
- * Never try to stop a closing door, wait for the next car.
- * Passengers nearest to the doors should move first when the car arrives.
- * Push and hold the "door open" button if doors need to be held open, or ask someone to push the button for you.

Escalator and moving walk safety tips

When entering escalators:

- * Watch the direction of the moving step and step on and off with extra care.
- * Keep loose clothing clear of steps and stand clear of the sides of the escalator.
- * Wear closed-toed and hard-soled shoes, and avoid wearing footwear made of soft-resin or other rubbery materials.
- * Hold children firmly with one arm or hold a child's free hand.
- * Grasp the handrail as you step onto the moving step.
- * Never walk in the opposite direction of the escalator.
- * Don't climb onto or ride the handrail.

- * Don't climb onto or ride the handrail.
- * Do not let children sit on steps or stand too close to sides.
- * If children are too small to hold handrail hold their hand and keep them centered on the step.
- * When exiting the escalator, don't hesitate and step off promptly.
- * Make sure to step over the comb fingers; don't let your feet slide off the end of the escalator.
- * Immediately move clear of the escalator exit area since other passengers may be behind you.

If there is an emergency, push one of the “stop” buttons located at the top or bottom landings of the escalator near the handrail or floor level. For more information about elevator and escalator safety, visit the NEII website at www.neii.org.