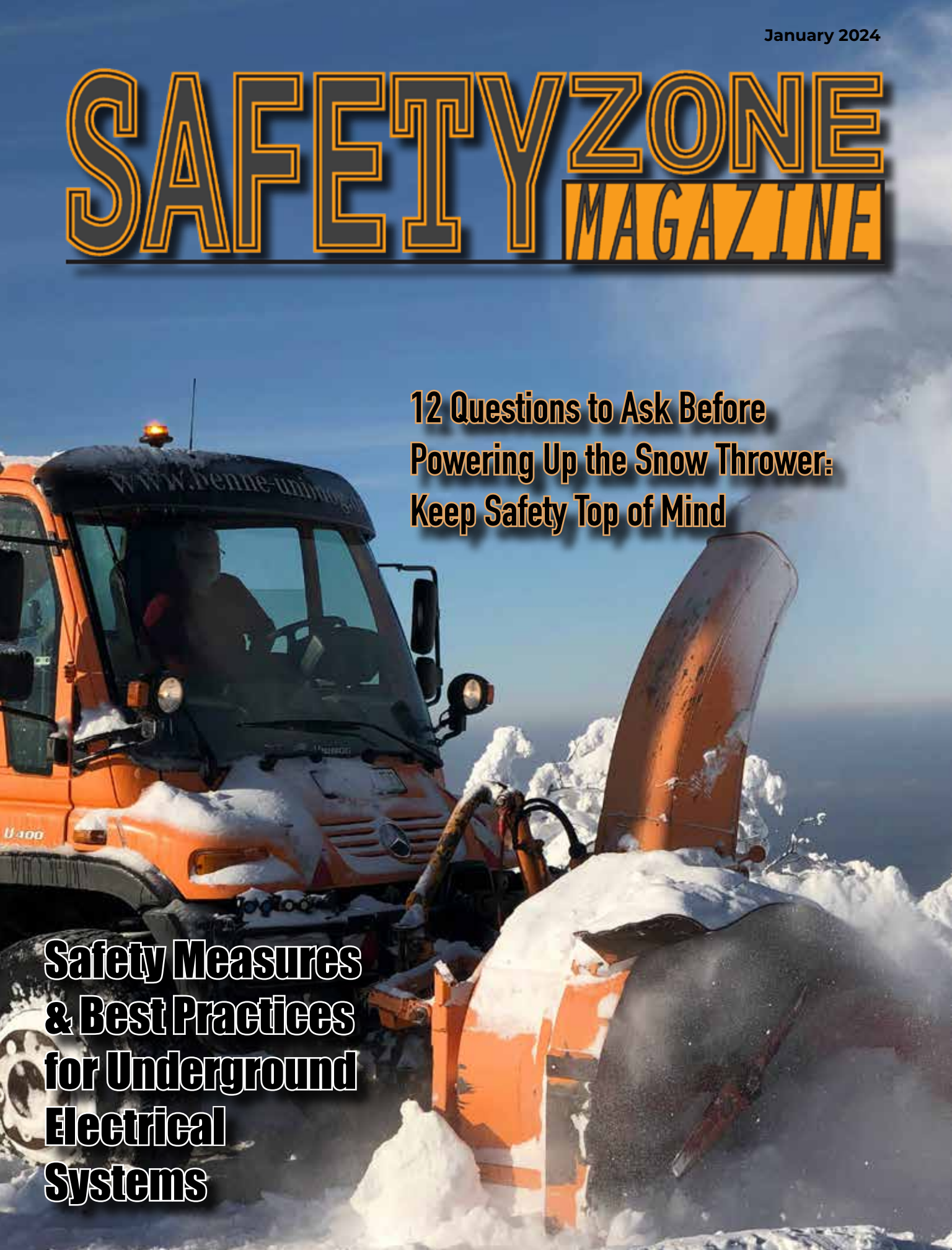


SAFETYZONE MAGAZINE

**12 Questions to Ask Before
Powering Up the Snow Thrower:
Keep Safety Top of Mind**

**Safety Measures
& Best Practices
for Underground
Electrical
Systems**



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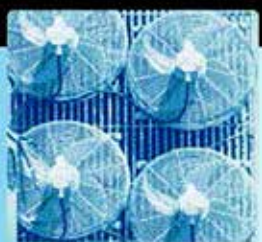
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PRESIDENT

Glen Hobson
205-441-5591
glen@handfmedia.net

DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING

Jake Dimenna
205-624-2182
jake@handfmedia.net

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS

Butch Cole
205-624-2180
butch@handfmedia.net

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Steven Hobson
steven@handfmedia.net

EDITOR

Brandon Greenhill
brandon@handfmedia.net

CREATIVE/ WEB DIRECTOR

Jacklyn Greenhill
jacklyn@handfmedia.net

P.O. Box 1568 • Pelham, AL 35124
Phone: 205-441-5591 • Fax: 205-624-2185
www.safetyzonemagazine.com
info@safetyzonemagazine.com

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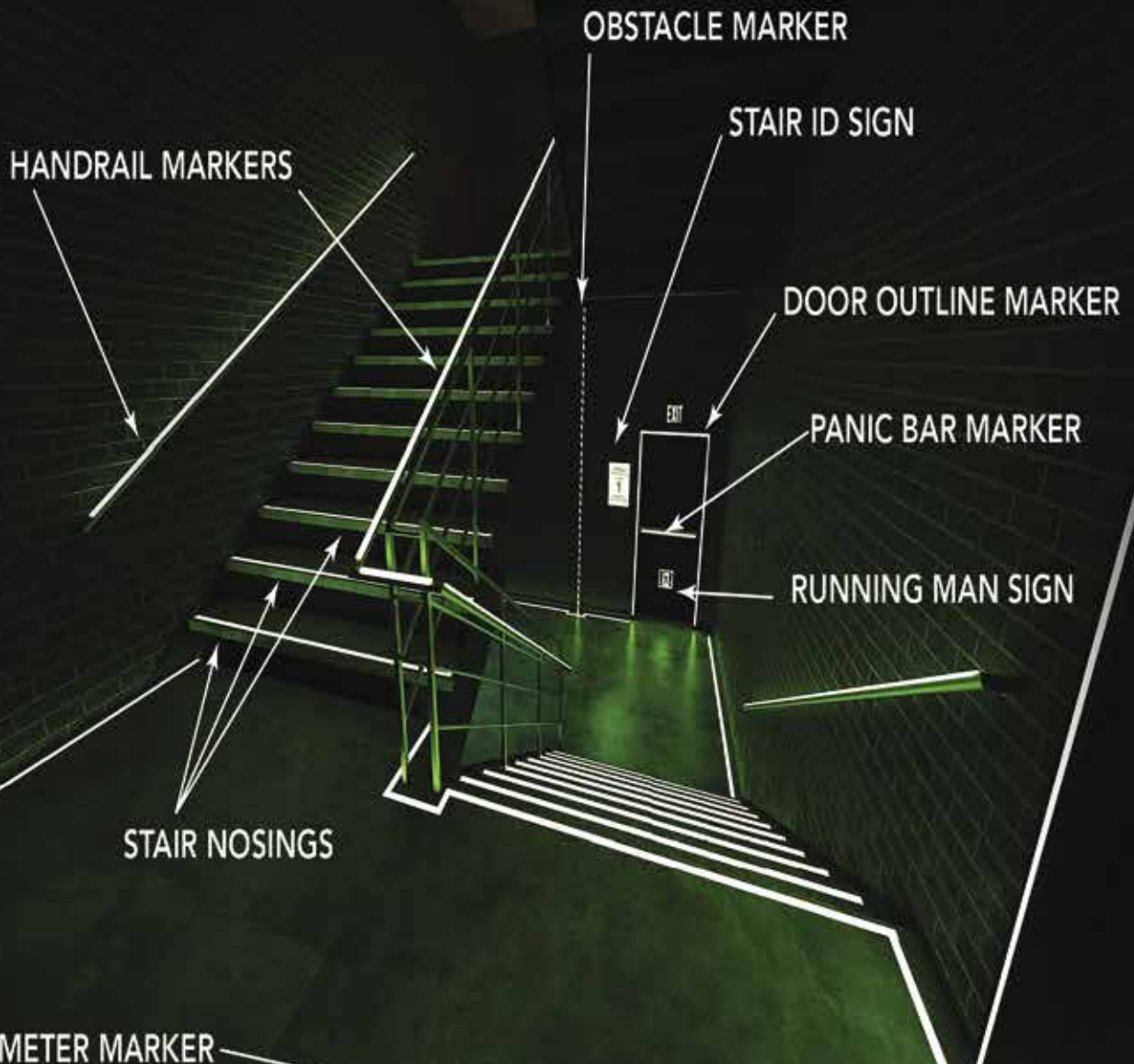
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12 Questions to Ask Before Powering Up the Snow Thrower: Keep Safety Top of Mind



Snow flurries and winter storms can be unpredictable and the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) encourages home and business owners to prepare in advance before bad weather hits.

“Outdoor power equipment like snow throwers can make quick work of a big job,” says OPEI President and CEO Kris Kiser. “Just remember, when getting out your snow thrower, review your owner’s manual. You should know how to correctly operate controls and quickly shut it off if necessary.”

OPEI offers 12 Questions to ask before operating a snow thrower.

Have you read your owner’s manual?

Know safe handling procedures and how to operate the controls of your machine. If the manual cannot be found, look it up online and store a copy on the computer.

Have you checked your equipment?

Equipment should be powered off when checking it. Adjust any cables and check the auger. If you forgot to drain the fuel before storing your equipment last year, empty the gas tank.

Have you purchased the right fuel?

Be sure to use the fuel recommended by the equipment manufacturer. Fuel that is more than 30 days old can phase separate and cause operating problems. Buy gasoline ahead of a storm. For more information see LookBeforeYouPump.com.

Is gasoline used safely?

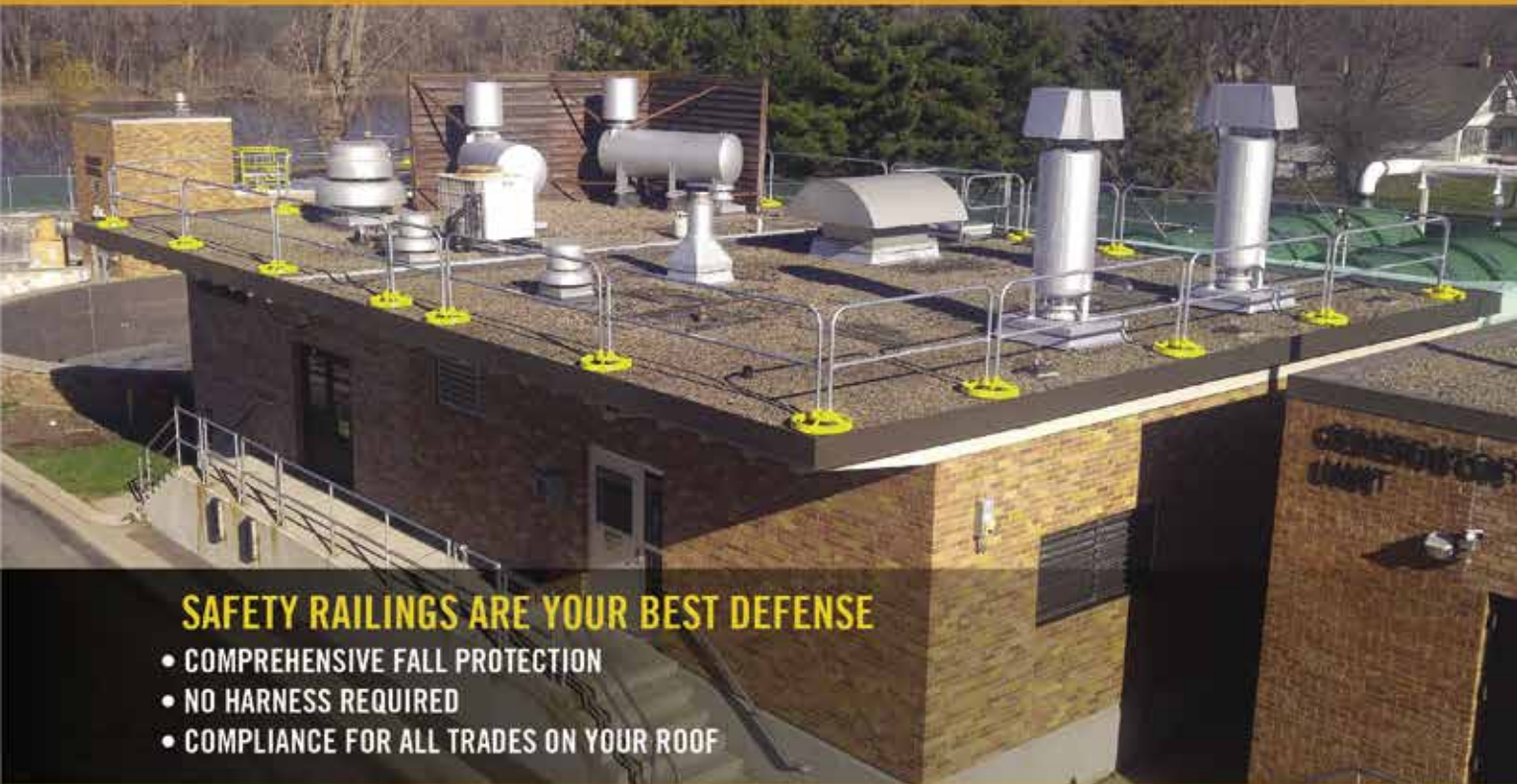
Never add fuel to a running or hot engine. Store gasoline in a fuel container and label with date purchased and ethanol content. Make sure fuel is stored safely and out of reach of children.

Are batteries charged (for battery-powered equipment)?

Make sure batteries are fully charged before a storm, in case electricity goes out. Recharge only with the charger specified by the manufacturer. A charger that is suitable for one type of battery pack may not be compatible with another battery pack. Follow all charging instructions and do not charge the battery pack or equipment outside the temperature range specified in the instructions. Charging improperly or at temperatures outside the specified range may damage the battery.

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Is the space clear of obstructions?

Snow can hide objects. Doormats, hoses, balls, toys, wires, and other debris should be removed. When run over by a snow thrower, these objects may harm the machine or people.

OPERATING SNOW THROWERS SAFELY

Are you dressed properly?

Wear safety glasses, gloves and footwear that can handle cold and slippery surfaces.

Is your clean out tool ready?

NEVER put your hands inside the auger or chute. Use a clean out tool to unclog snow or debris. Always turn off the snow thrower and wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before clearing any clogs.

Is your snow thrower operated only in visible conditions?

Never operate the snow thrower without good visibility or light.

Will you use extreme caution clearing slopes and hills?

Never attempt to clear steep slopes. Use caution when changing directions on slopes or inclines.



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For electric equipment, do you pay attention to where the cord is?

Use an extension cord designed for outdoor use. Be aware of where the power cord is at all times when using the machine. Avoid tripping. Do not run over the power cord.

Are pets and children inside while the snow thrower is operating?

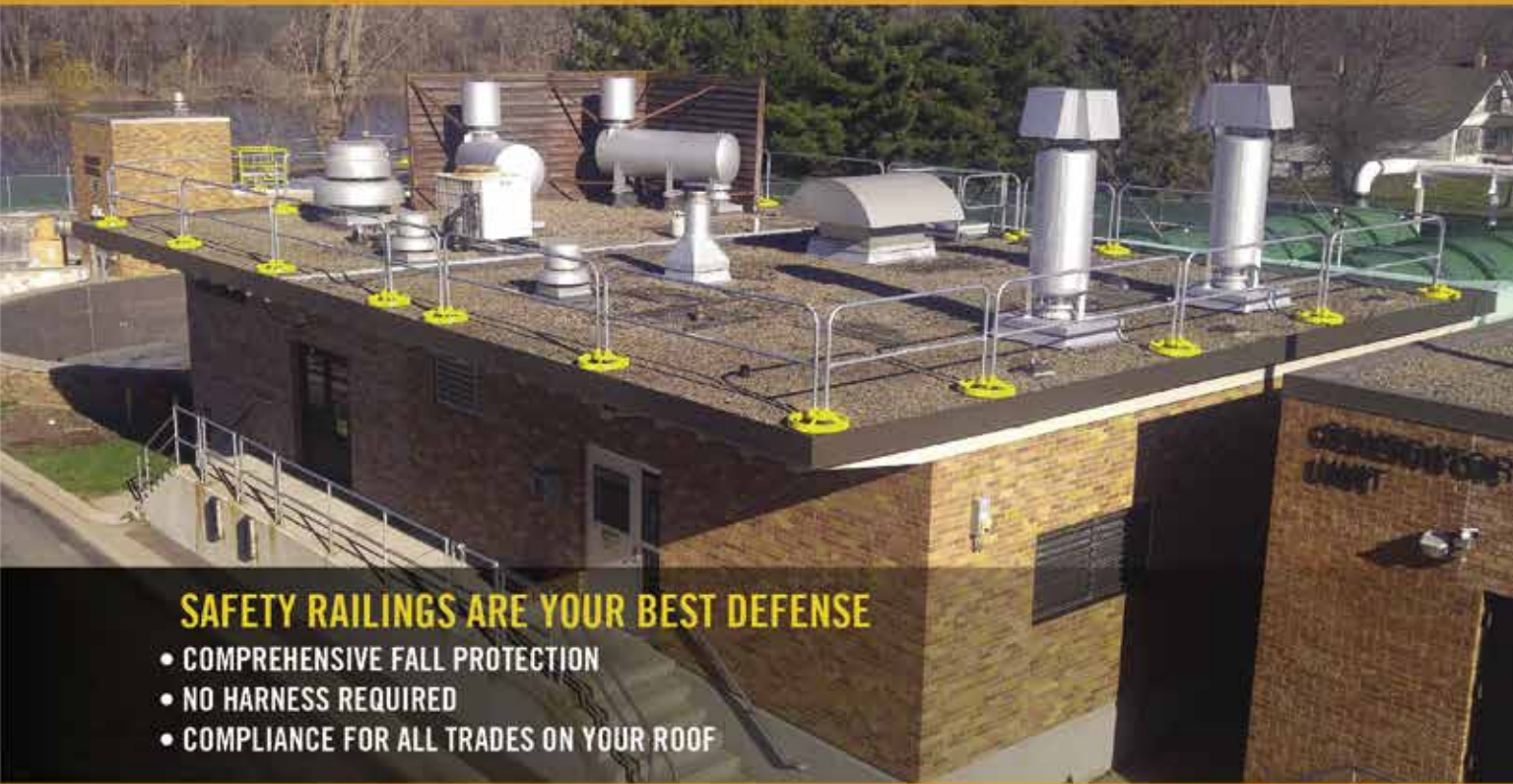
It's best to keep kids and pets indoors and supervised while a snow thrower is operating. Do not allow them to play in the snow as it is tossed out of the chute.

About OPEI

OPEI is an international trade association representing manufacturers and suppliers of outdoor power equipment, small engines, battery power systems, portable generators, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars. OPEI is the advocacy voice of the industry, and a recognized Standards Development Organization for the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and active internationally through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) in the development of safety and performance standards. OPEI owns Equip Exposition, the international landscape, outdoor living, and equipment exposition, and administers the TurfMutt Foundation, which directs the environmental education program, TurfMutt. OPEI-Canada represents members on a host of issues, including recycling, emissions and other regulatory developments across the Canadian provinces. •

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Safety Measures & Best Practices for Underground Electrical Systems

However, working with these systems can pose numerous safety challenges. To ensure the safety of workers and the public, it's important to follow best practices and implement safety measures. In this blog post, we'll explore some key safety measures and best practices for underground electrical systems.

The Importance of Safety in Underground Electrical Systems
Prioritizing safety is crucial when dealing with underground electrical systems. These systems consist of wires, cables, transformers, and other components, all hidden beneath the ground. This hidden nature increases the risk of damage due to natural elements, construction activities, and even accidental dig-ins during excavation work. Failure to adhere to safety protocols can lead to serious accidents, injuries, electrical outages, and in worst cases, loss of life.

Key Takeaways:

- Underground electrical systems are hidden beneath the ground, which increases the risk of damage
- Failure to follow safety protocols can lead to accidents, injuries, and electrical outages
- Prioritizing safety is crucial to prevent loss of life and ensure uninterrupted power supply

Safety Measures for Underground Electrical Systems

To mitigate risks associated with underground electrical systems, the following safety measures should be implemented:

Identification and Marking

Before beginning any excavation work, it's vital to identify and locate underground electrical systems. This can be done through proper documentation and usage of utility maps. Furthermore, it's important to mark the location of these systems clearly to prevent accidental damage during construction activities.

Protective Equipment and Tools

To ensure the safety of workers, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be provided. This includes safety gloves, insulated footwear, face shields, and protective

clothing. Additionally, specialized tools such as insulated tools are necessary to minimize the risk of electrical shock.

Training and Education

Proper training and education are essential for all personnel working with underground electrical systems. Workers should be well-versed in safety protocols, emergency procedures, and the use of safety equipment. Regular refresher courses should be conducted to keep employees up to date with the latest safety practices.

Grounding and Bonding

Grounding and bonding are crucial to ensure the safety of underground electrical systems. Proper grounding prevents the buildup of electrical charges, while bonding connects all metallic parts to create an equipotential plane. Adequate grounding and bonding can minimize the risk of electrical shocks and damage to equipment.

Regular Inspections and Maintenance

Regular inspections and maintenance are vital to identify any potential issues or deteriorations in underground electrical systems. This includes checking for damaged cables, loose connections, or signs of corrosion. Timely repairs and replacements can prevent system failures and mitigate safety risks.

Advantages of Proper Safety Implementation

Implementing safety measures and following best practices for underground electrical systems come with several advantages:

Minimized Accidents and Injuries

By adhering to safety protocols, the risk of accidents and injuries is significantly reduced. This protects both workers and the public, ensuring a safer working environment.

Improved Reliability and Efficiency

A well-maintained and protected underground electrical system is more reliable and efficient. Regular inspections and preventive maintenance minimize downtime, reducing the risk of power outages and disruptions.

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Cost Savings

Investing in safety measures can lead to cost savings in the long run. Accidents and subsequent downtime can be costly for businesses, making preventative measures an essential investment.

Compliance with Regulations

Following safety measures ensures compliance with regulatory standards set by relevant authorities. This prevents legal issues, penalties, and damage to the reputation of organizations.

In Conclusion

Safety is paramount when working with underground electrical systems. By implementing proper safety measures, such as identification and marking, provision of protective equipment, training and education, grounding and bonding, and regular inspections, the risk of accidents and electrical outages can be significantly minimized. These safety measures not only protect workers and the public but also improve reliability, efficiency, and overall cost savings. Prioritizing safety ensures uninterrupted power supply and contributes to a safer and more productive environment for all involved.

Benefits and Advantages of Underground Electrical Systems

In this article, we will explore why underground electrical systems are becoming increasingly popular and discuss the key advantages they offer. So, without further ado, let's dive in!

Enhanced Aesthetic Appeal

One of the main reasons for choosing underground electrical systems is their ability to enhance the aesthetic appeal of an area. Unlike overhead power lines, which can often obstruct views and disrupt the overall visual harmony of a neighborhood, underground systems are discreetly hidden beneath the ground. This underground placement not only reduces visual clutter but also allows for a cleaner and more polished landscape.

Improved Reliability and Safety

Underground electrical systems offer enhanced reliability and safety, making them an attractive choice for many. Unlike overhead lines, which are exposed to various weather conditions such as strong winds, storms, and falling trees, underground systems are protected from these external factors. This significantly reduces the risk of power outages and electrical hazards caused by weather-related incidents, ensuring a more consistent and secure power supply. Moreover, underground electrical systems are less prone to damage from accidents, vandalism, or natural disasters. Being buried underground, they are shielded from accidental contact or physical harm, making them a safer choice for both the public and electrical utility workers.

Minimal Maintenance and Longevity

Underground electrical systems typically require less maintenance compared to their overhead counterparts. Since the underground cables are shielded from external elements, they face minimal wear and tear. This translates into lower maintenance costs and fewer disruptions for repairs or replacements.

According to industry statistics, underground electrical systems have an average lifespan of 30 to 50 years, whereas overhead power lines need to be replaced every 20 to 30 years. This longer lifespan reflects the durability and reliability

of underground systems, making them a cost-effective option in the long run.

Enhanced Grid Resilience

With the increasing frequency of severe weather events like hurricanes and thunderstorms, the need for resilient electrical systems is more crucial than ever. Underground electrical systems excel in this aspect by minimizing the vulnerability of power grids to weather-related disruptions. Even when above-ground systems fail during extreme weather conditions, underground systems continue to provide power, ensuring vital services remain operational in critical times.

Future-Proofing Infrastructure

As cities and urban areas continue to expand, the demand for more advanced and efficient infrastructure grows. Underground electrical systems offer the advantage of future-proofing as they can accommodate technological advancements and increased power requirements. They provide flexibility for adding new cables and upgrading existing infrastructure without the need for extensive disruptions or alterations.

Moreover, the installation of underground systems allows for better space utilization, especially in densely populated areas or urban landscapes where space is at a premium. By utilizing the underground space, cities can maximize land usage, allowing for more green spaces, enhanced urban planning, and improved cityscape aesthetics.

Key Takeaways

- Underground electrical systems enhance aesthetic appeal by being discreetly hidden underground.
- They offer improved reliability and safety as they are protected from weather-related incidents and accidental damage.
- Underground systems require minimal maintenance and have a longer lifespan, resulting in cost savings in the long run.
- They provide enhanced grid resilience by minimizing vulnerability to weather-related disruptions.
- Underground electrical systems are future-proof, accommodating technological advancements and increasing power requirements.

In conclusion, underground electrical systems offer numerous benefits and advantages, ranging from enhancing aesthetic appeal and improving reliability to providing grid resilience and future-proofing infrastructure. With their ability to ensure a reliable power supply, minimize disruptions, and create visually appealing environments, underground electrical systems are increasingly being recognized as an essential component of modern electrical infrastructure.

Common Challenges and Solutions for Underground Electrical Systems

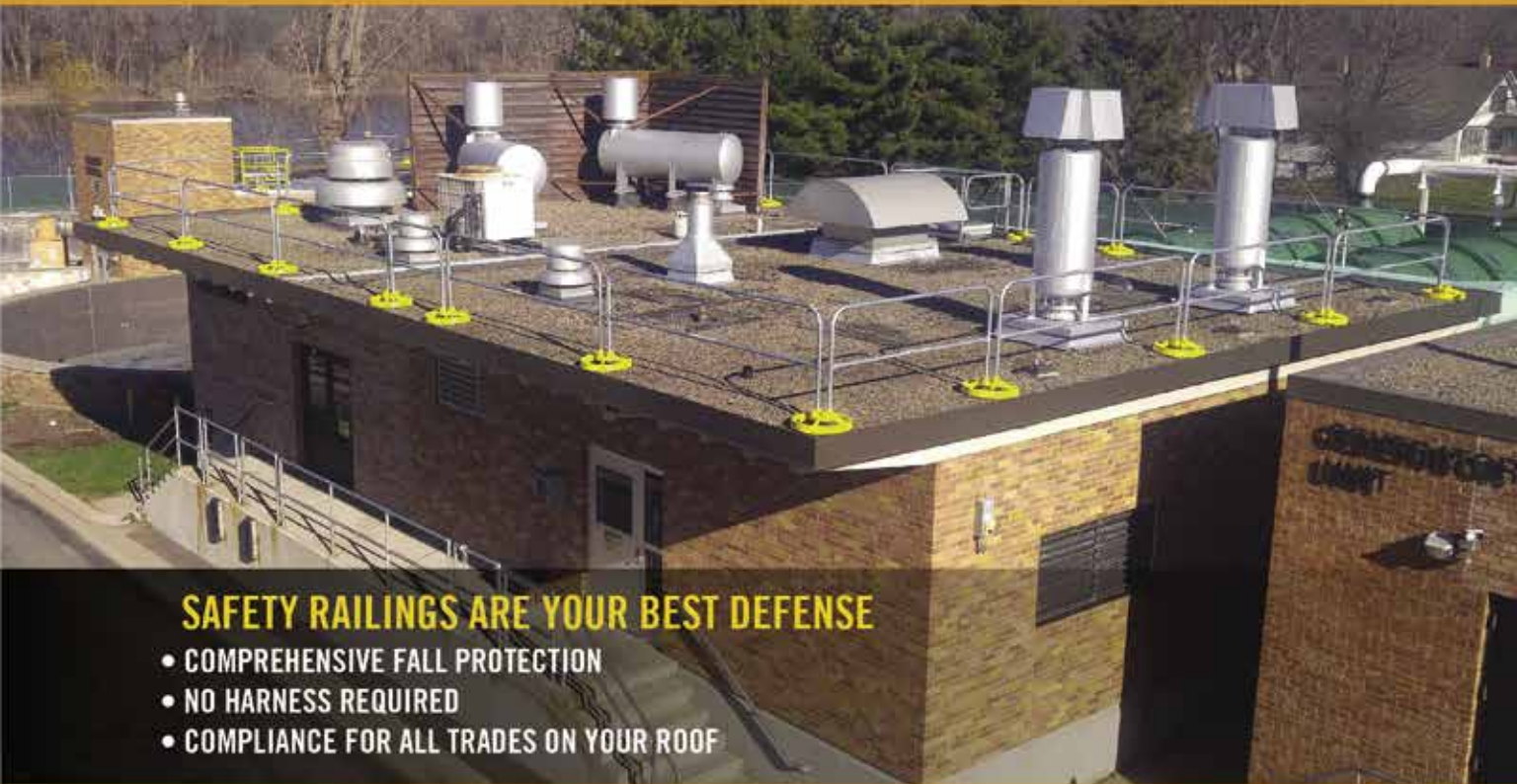
However, like any other infrastructure, they also come with their own set of challenges. In this article, we will explore some of the common challenges faced by underground electrical systems and discuss potential solutions to address them.

Challenges:

- **Complex Installation:** Underground electrical systems involve intricate installation processes that require extensive planning. The underground cables need to be

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carefully routed to avoid other underground utilities, such as water and gas lines, which can increase the complexity of the project.

- **Maintenance and Repairs:** When compared to overhead electrical systems, maintaining and repairing underground electrical systems can be more challenging. Identifying and locating faults can be time-consuming and requires specialized equipment and expertise.
- **Environmental Considerations:** Underground electrical systems are susceptible to environmental factors such as moisture, corrosion, and seismic activities. These factors can lead to cable degradation and insulation damage, affecting the overall performance and reliability of the system.
- **Cost Constraints:** Underground electrical systems often incur higher costs during installation and maintenance. The need for specialized equipment, excavation, and safety measures can significantly impact the overall cost of the project.

Solutions:

Effective Planning and Design:

Proper planning and design are key to overcoming the challenges associated with underground electrical systems. Here are some strategies to consider:

- Thoroughly survey the construction area to identify potential obstacles and plan routes that avoid other utilities.
- Consult with experienced electrical engineers to optimize the design and minimize installation complexities.
- Consider future expansions and allow flexibility in the design to accommodate any future modifications.

Advanced Fault Detection Systems:

Quickly identifying and locating faults is crucial for minimizing downtime and ensuring the reliability of underground electrical systems. Implementing advanced fault detection systems can significantly streamline this process. Some potential solutions include:

- Installation of underground fault indicators that provide real-time alerts and location information.
- Implementation of automated fault location systems that use sophisticated algorithms and testing techniques.
- Regular inspections and maintenance checks to proactively identify potential faults before they become critical issues.

Protective Measures:

Considering the environmental challenges faced by underground electrical systems, implementing protective measures is essential. Here are some steps to enhance the system's resilience:

Using high-quality, durable cables with appropriate insulation materials to withstand moisture and corrosion.

Implementing waterproof enclosures and cable seals to prevent water ingress into the system.

Incorporation of seismic reinforcement techniques to minimize the impact of earthquakes.

Lifecycle Cost Analysis:

Although underground electrical systems may have higher initial costs, they often prove to be cost-effective in the long run. Performing a lifecycle cost analysis can help justify the investment and optimize the overall expenses.

Consider the following:

- Estimate the total cost of installation, maintenance, and repairs over the expected lifespan of the system.
- Factor in the potential benefits, such as reduced maintenance and improved reliability, to determine the overall cost savings.
- Compare the findings with alternative solutions, such as overhead electrical systems, to evaluate the feasibility.

Key Takeaways:

Proper planning and design are crucial for successful installation and operation of underground electrical systems. Implementing advanced fault detection systems can minimize downtime and improve system reliability. Protective measures, such as using high-quality cables and waterproof enclosures, are essential to overcome environmental challenges.

Performing a lifecycle cost analysis can help justify the investment in underground electrical systems.

In conclusion, underground electrical systems offer numerous benefits, but they also present unique challenges. Effective planning, advanced fault detection systems, protective measures, and thorough cost analysis can help overcome these challenges and ensure the efficient operation of underground electrical systems. By addressing these common challenges, we can ensure a reliable and sustainable power supply for our communities.

Maintenance and Upkeep of Underground Electrical Systems

In this article, we will discuss the importance of maintaining underground electrical systems, key challenges in their upkeep, and best practices for effective maintenance.

The Importance of Maintaining Underground Electrical Systems

Underground electrical systems are commonly used to distribute power and provide lighting in urban areas, commercial complexes, and industrial facilities. These systems consist of cables, transformers, switchgear, and other electrical components that are installed underground. Proper maintenance of these systems ensures their longevity, reliability, and safe operation, avoiding potential hazards and minimizing downtime. Let's dive deeper into the key reasons why maintaining underground electrical systems is essential:

- **Operational Efficiency:** Regular maintenance helps identify and address potential issues in underground electrical systems before they escalate into major problems. This ensures uninterrupted power supply, minimizes the risk of outages, and enhances operational efficiency.
- **Safety:** Underground electrical systems carry high voltage electricity, which can be extremely dangerous if not properly maintained. Regular inspections and maintenance activities help identify faulty equipment, damaged cables, and other safety risks, preventing accidents, and ensuring the safety of both the public and electrical personnel.
- **Cost Savings:** Timely maintenance significantly reduces the need for emergency repairs and replacements, which can be costly. By proactively addressing issues, potential breakdowns can be minimized, leading to cost savings in the long run.
- **Compliance with Regulations:** Maintenance of underground electrical systems is often required by local regulations and electrical codes. Regular upkeep ensures compliance with these standards, avoiding legal penalties and ensuring the smooth running of a facility or infrastructure.

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Challenges in the Upkeep of Underground Electrical Systems
Maintaining underground electrical systems comes with its own set of challenges. These challenges need to be addressed to ensure effective upkeep and optimal performance. Let's explore some common challenges faced during the maintenance of underground electrical systems:

- **Inaccessibility:** Underground electrical systems are often buried beneath layers of soil, concrete, or asphalt, making them difficult to access for maintenance and repairs. Specialized equipment and techniques are required to locate and access these systems efficiently.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Many underground electrical systems have been in operation for several decades. Aging infrastructure poses a higher risk of failures and breakdowns, requiring more frequent maintenance and potential upgrades.
- **Environmental Factors:** Underground electrical systems are exposed to various environmental conditions such as moisture, temperature fluctuations, and vibrations. These factors can degrade cables, corrode equipment, and impact system integrity, necessitating regular inspections and maintenance to prevent failures.
- **Complexity:** Underground electrical systems are complex networks with multiple interconnected components. Maintaining such systems requires skilled professionals with a deep understanding of their intricate operations.

Best Practices for Maintenance of Underground Electrical Systems

Implementing best practices is crucial to ensure the effective maintenance of underground electrical systems. Here are some key steps that should be followed:

1. **Regular Inspections:** Conduct routine inspections to identify any signs of wear and tear, damaged equipment, or potential hazards.

2. **Testing and Diagnostics:** Perform periodic testing and diagnostics to assess the performance and condition of the underground electrical system.
3. **Preventative Maintenance:** Implement a preventative maintenance program that includes cleaning, lubrication, and replacement of worn-out components to extend the system's lifespan.
4. **Training and Education:** Train maintenance personnel on proper handling, safety protocols, and the latest industry practices for maintaining underground electrical systems.
5. **Documentation:** Keep accurate records of maintenance activities, repairs, and any modifications made to the underground electrical system, helping in future reference and decision-making processes.
6. **Collaboration with Experts:** Seek assistance from experienced electrical contractors and engineers who specialize in underground electrical systems for complex maintenance tasks or upgrades.

Key Takeaways

Effective maintenance and upkeep of underground electrical systems are critical for ensuring reliable power supply, preventing accidents, and minimizing downtime. By following best practices, conducting regular inspections, and addressing issues proactively, the operational efficiency, safety, and longevity of these systems can be optimized.

The complexity and challenges associated with maintaining underground electrical systems call for specialized expertise. Working with knowledgeable professionals and implementing a proactive maintenance strategy, in compliance with regulations, will lead to increased operational efficiency, cost savings, and enhanced safety. •

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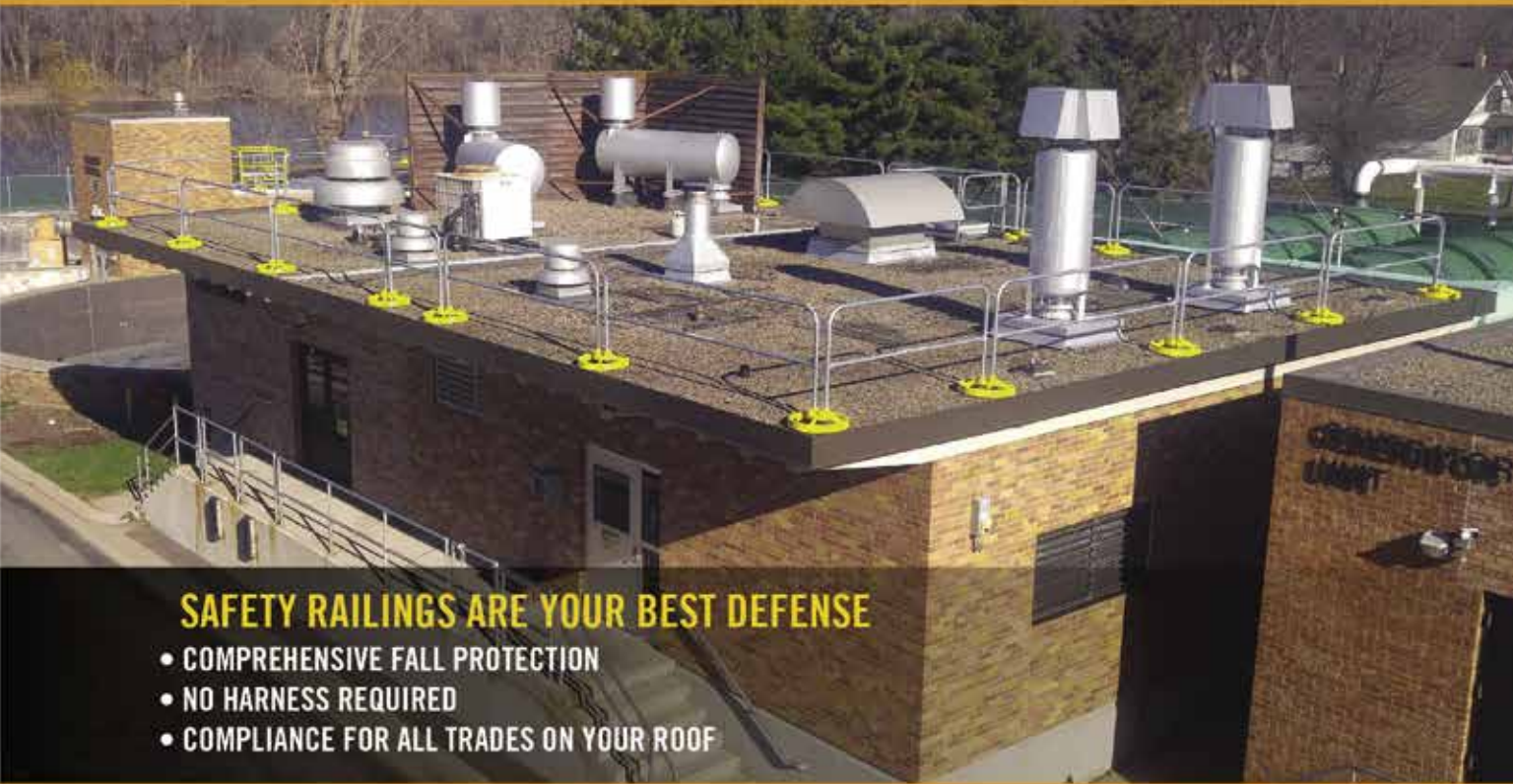


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