

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **NATIONAL ELEVATOR & ESCALATOR SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK IS NOVEMBER 10 - 16**

*Division of Oil and Public Safety oversees inspections and the  
safety of conveyances in Colorado*

(DENVER) – Each year since 1994, the Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation celebrates the second week of November as National Elevator and Escalator Safety Awareness Week.

This year, the Safety Week will be celebrated November 10 to 16. Governor Hickenlooper has issued a proclamation declaring the week a time to promote public awareness of the safe and proper use of elevators, escalators and moving walks.

“They are among the safest ways to move pedestrian traffic but accidents still occur and most are avoidable,” says Mahesh Albuquerque, Director of the Division of Oil and Public Safety. That division, a part of the Department of Labor and Employment, has oversight responsibility for the installation, maintenance and regular inspections of elevators, escalators and other conveyances.

“Children are the most at-risk group involved in incidents on elevators and particularly escalators,” Albuquerque says. “It’s important that children learn how to properly and safely use these conveyances.” During the week of November 10, presentations will be made at schools across the Denver Metro area.

The week can also offer a learning experience for adults. Since the invention of the elevator in the early 1800s and the escalator at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, a variety of myths and fears have surrounded their safety.

Common myths surrounding elevators include the belief that they are held up by only one cord that can fray and break, leaving passengers trapped in a falling car. Some people have heard stories of an elevator car falling several floors before violently “catching itself” and others believe that if an elevator is stuck between floors they are in danger of falling and should try to climb out the elevator’s ceiling to safety.

(More)

Myths about escalators include the belief that the moving staircase can malfunction and suddenly “flatten out,” sending the passengers tumbling down what has become a smooth metal hillside. Some people believe that not all escalators move at the same speed and that some are programmed to move much faster than others. Perhaps the most common myth is that if an escalator is not in motion, it is just a simple set of stairs and can be walked up quickly and easily just as one would any staircase.

Albuquerque says that the Division of Oil and Public Safety will use the week of November 10 to set the facts straight and promote the proper use of “people movers” for children and adults alike. “We want to let Coloradans know how they can avoid accidents and report concerns,” he says. “The week of November 10 is an opportunity for us to join with the industry in spreading the word about public safety.”

The Conveyance Program of the Division of Oil and Public Safety responds to questions and concerns about the operation of conveyances across Colorado. Individuals can contact Program Manager Greg Johnson at 303-318-8536 or via email at [greg.johnson@state.co.us](mailto:greg.johnson@state.co.us). Safety tips and facts about public conveyances can be found at <http://www.eesf.org>.

Among the safety tips that help prevent incidents:

#### **Elevators**

- Watch your step
- Leave the closing doors alone
- If doors don’t open, ring the alarm button and wait; don’t try to open the doors
- If there is a fire in the building, use the stairs

#### **Escalators**

- Step on and off carefully
- People only – no strollers
- Take care of younger children while moving on the escalator; help them on and off
- Don’t touch the sides below the handrail
- Hold the handrail while the escalator is in motion
- Stand facing forward

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