

TESTIGOS CRISTIANOS DE JEHOVÁ

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KHF:KHE December 6, 2018

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS

Re: Kingdom Hall Maintenance Tasks Involving Risks

Dear Brothers:

We are very grateful for your support of the Kingdom Hall maintenance program. The condition of the Halls has improved and the useful life of the installations is increasing. As a result, dedicated funds are used more effectively. Also, this special feature of sacred service offers the opportunity to work together in a peaceful and loving environment. Even more important, Jehovah's name is glorified. Nonetheless, there are times that maintenance tasks may involve certain risks.

The safety and wellbeing of persons who attend meetings at the Kingdom Hall and of those that do cleaning or maintenance work is a priority. Therefore, over the years instructions have been given to prevent accidents. For example, as a general rule dangerous materials should not be stored at the Hall; and chemical products necessary for cleaning and maintenance are clearly identified and kept in a secure place, out of reach for children.

Moreover, the elders distribute a copy of the document *Working Together Safely—Standards for Theocratic Construction and Maintenance* (DC-82) to each member of the congregation that participates in maintenance work or in other activities that involve a certain degree of risk, such as using electric tools or ladders. The DC-82 states, in part:

"[...] Each of us needs to do all we can to protect life, and this is especially true when it comes to construction and maintenance operations. When a dangerous situation is not avoided, serious injury or death can occur. Words cannot express the physical and emotional impact this can have—it is devastating. All of us, therefore, have a moral and spiritual responsibility to work safely! Our goal is to achieve an accident-free environment in all theocratic buildings and projects. This can be accomplished if each one views safety as a reflection of their personal relationship with Jehovah."

Having in mind these factors, it has been decided to limit the participation of local brothers in the case of two specific types of work, as explained below:

Work on the Roof. Access to the Kingdom Hall roof is prohibited, except for qualified volunteers who have been authorized by the representative of the Local Design/Construction Department or by the Maintenance Trainer. When need arises to do maintenance work or even inspect the roof, the elders will advise the Maintenance Trainer. Taking into account the work to be done and the risks involved, the Trainer will coordinate matters so that qualified volunteers are assigned or the work contracted with a specialized firm.

Electrical Work. It is prohibited for anyone except the qualified volunteers authorized by those in charge of maintenance of the Kingdom Hall to go into the electrical system. If there are no professional electricians in the congregations that use the Hall, the elders will advise the Maintenance Trainer. Taking into account the work to be done and the risks involved, the Trainer will coordinate matters so that qualified volunteers are assigned or the work contracted with a specialized firm.

Besides the types of work mentioned above, if any work needs to be done for which there is no one qualified available or the means are not at hand to handle it with safety, it should not be done. In such cases the elders will contact the Maintenance Trainer to request instructions.

Taking part in maintenance work on the Kingdom Hall is a privilege, but it also entails serious responsibility. Having in mind the Scriptural principles regarding the sanctity of life, safety must always have priority over any other factor, be it cost, the time employed or effectiveness. Therefore, no one should assume risks nor carry out work for which he is not qualified.

What can each one do to promote safety? Whenever you perform maintenance work, you should be very conscious of your own safety and that of those around you. Carefully study *Working Together Safely—Standards for Theocratic Construction and Maintenance* (DC-82) and any other documentation provided by the elders or the brothers in charge of the work assigned. You are responsible to carry out the instructions provided by those in charge so as to work safely. You will be personally responsible for your own safety and that of those affected by your work. If you are asked to perform a task that seems dangerous or to work in a way that does not seem safe to you, you should stop, request clarification, and then proceed only when you see that you can do so safely. Similarly, if you see another person working in a way that is not safe, you have the Scriptural responsibility to take the initiative and encourage him to make needed adjustments.

It is a sign of spirituality when a brother takes safety regulations seriously while caring for places of worship. Doing this shows that we see life as Jehovah sees it. (w 17 November page 16 ¶12) In this way, as was pointed out to the Thessalonian Christians of the first century, we also “have confidence in the Lord regarding you, that you are carrying out and will go on carrying out our instructions.”—2 Thessalonians 3:4.

Receive, dear brothers, an expression of our warm regards and fervent Christian love.

Your brothers,

Testigos Cristianos de Jehová

c: Circuit overseers

TO THE BODY OF ELDERS: This letter should be read at the midweek meeting following receiving it. Please commend the brothers for their support of the maintenance program and help them to understand the importance of following the guidelines set forth. Maintenance committees and brothers assigned to over work can use this letter to review some key points with the volunteers before beginning work. Thank you very much.