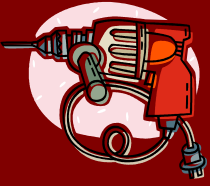




Safety Talk: Hand & Portable Tools



Power tool injuries account for as many as 400,000 annual emergency room visits. When using Hand and Portable Tools, be especially cautious when using those that are powered.

Hand tools are commonly taken for granted and their hazards quite often overlooked:

- Always inspect your tools prior to using them – poor maintenance could make the tool hazardous to use;
- Discard or tag broken tools to prevent others from using them;
- Only use tools for the intended purposes and how they are intended to be used;
- Ensure that you can grip your tools properly – don't use them if your hands are oily or wet or if the handles are broken or loose;
- Store sharps tools when done using them so that sharp edges aren't exposed; and
- Never use your hands to secure a workpiece – use a vice or clamps instead!



Don't leave your open blade on the bench!

Power tools require additional care since they produce higher forces and may run on electricity:

- All electrical power tools should be grounded (three prongs) or double insulated;
- Never handle an electrical power tool by its cord;
- Remember to use a GFCI when operating electrical power tools around water;
- Guards protect the user against moving parts – all of them must be in place when using the power tool; and
- Never use your hands to secure a workpiece – use a vice or clamps instead!



What's wrong with this picture?

Don't forget about PPE when using your tools:

- Always, always protect your eyes with safety glasses when using any tool;
- Power tools can be loud (especially pneumatic tools) – wear your hearing protection;
- Wear cut-resistant gloves when handling sharp objects such as saw blades;
- Never wear loose-fitting gloves or loose clothing when operating power tools; and
- A job safety analysis (JSA) is a helpful method to determine other PPE that may be needed for your job.

Examples of poor maintenance of tools:

1. Mushroom-headed hammers or chisels.
2. Frayed or exposed wiring on power tools.
3. Balded screws or bolts that can't be gripped by your tool.
4. Dull knives, saws, or drill bits.
5. Worn teeth on a pipe wrench.
6. Cracked or loose handles or grips.
7. Missing or broken guards.

Examples of misuse of tools:

1. Using a screwdriver as a chisel.
2. Driving a nail with anything other than a hammer.
3. Not using a vice or fixture to hold a work piece when operating a drill, removing screws, cutting, or filing.
4. Using a hammer claw as a pry bar or sledgehammer.

Hand & Power Tool Policy:

Please review the "Hand and Portable Power Tools" policy on the Environmental Health and Safety website for further information.