



Toolbox Meeting Topics

Hand Tool Safety

#127 (8/04)

Although hand tools are usually small in size and considered to be relatively harmless, if not used properly and safely, they can cause serious injuries to workers. Accidents and injuries involving hand tools are often the result of:

1. Using the wrong tool for the job.
2. Using the proper tool incorrectly.
3. Failing to wear personal protective equipment (PPE).
4. Failing to follow safety rules/guidelines.

To reduce the chances of injury from occurring, use the following checklist prior to using hand tools:

1. **Inspection.** Inspect hand tools before each use. Repair or replace worn, damaged tools.
 - Examine screws, nuts, bolts, and moveable parts to make sure they are tight.
 - Check hammer and other tool handles for cracks and tightness.
 - Check chisels and other striking tools for mushroomed ends. "Dress" them to prevent chipping of these ends.
2. **Electrical.**
 - Use grounded or double-insulated tools.
 - Before plugging or unplugging tools, make sure the power switch is turned off.
 - Be sure power tools are plugged into an outlet that is protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
 - Check power cords and extension cords for splits, cracks, or excessive wear. Repair damaged or worn cords immediately.
3. **Sharp.** Keep cutting tools sharp. Sharp tools are safer and easier to use than dull tools.
4. **Selection.** Select the right type and size tool for the job.
5. **Secure.** When working on ladders or scaffolding, make sure that your tools are secure. Falling tools can injure other workers.
6. **Wear PPE.** Wear all appropriate PPE such as hardhats, safety goggles, face shields, safety shoes, etc. (Most new tools have warning labels advising what protective equipment is needed for safe use of the tool.)
7. **Dress.** Jewelry (especially rings), loose clothing, and long hair can get caught in power tools, causing serious injury and even death.
8. **Clean.** Clean hand tools after each use and store them in a protected location where they will not be subject to dirt and physical damage.

Attendees: _____

Notes: _____

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