

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Hand Tool Safety



Hand tools, like most other pieces of equipment, offer much time and labor saving efforts with their use. Also, like other pieces of equipment, misuse can lead to serious injuries. We talk about rote reactions and repetitions; using hand tools has the same identical traits in common. As long as we remain conscience of our actions and respect the particular tool that we are using, our chances of finishing the project increase greatly.

Following are some key points for you to consider and help you become reoriented in the proper use and respect for the various types of hand tools:

- **Wear approved eye protection** - Industrial-quality eye protection should be worn at all times. Safety glasses should have the Z87.1 logo on them to assure that they are industrial quality.
- **Wear proper clothing** - The clothing will vary depending on the type of tools that you are working with. Work clothes should not be loose, baggy, or highly flammable. For protection against burns, wear coveralls, high-top shoes, leather aprons, and leather gloves. Remove all paper from the pockets and wear pants without cuffs. If you are working in an area with heavy metals, wear steel-toed shoes that have non-skid soles. Avoid using clothing that contains synthetic fabrics. They have a low flashpoint and can result in serious burns.
- **Protect your hair, scalp, and head** – If you have long hair, pull it back and tie it with a band or wear a cap to help protect you from getting it caught in tools; especially be extra careful with long hair around drills and drill presses. If you are working around steel or carpentry construction, wear a hard hat to protect your “noggin.”
- **Keep cutting edge tools sharp** – Dull tools are dangerous and can be more dangerous than sharp ones if we aren’t careful. It takes more hand pressure and hammering to get the same efficiency as sharp ones. Before you start a cutting project, check for nails that need to be removed and always cut away from your body.
- **Watch your fingers** – Be careful when hammering so that you hit the object that you are hammering and not your finger. Obviously, hitting the object allows you to finish the project faster and the finger won’t hurt as bad.
- **Keep your mind on your work – Concentrate, concentrate, and concentrate!** Avoid horseplay and loud talk. Loud talking, as well as pushing, running, and scuffling while working with hand tools can cause serious accidents. Be alert - work defensively!
- **Keep the work areas and tools clean** – Obviously, we all know that dirty, greasy, and oily tools and floors will increase the odds of an accident. The age-old adage can surely hold true here. Clean and return unneeded tools to their rightful place. Clean up spills and scraps from the floor and equipments when they happen and not later, when someone might slip or trip on it. Keep walkways and paths clear. If you are working in dusty conditions, use a respirator.
- **Carry and store tools properly** – Carry all tools with cutting edges down. Never carry sharp tools in your pocket. As with carrying sharp edged tools, when storing them use the same rule of thumb. Store them with the cutting edge down.
- **Inspect tools before you use them** – Avoid using damaged tools. Tools that appear to be damaged, such as hammers with broken handles, chisels with the tops flattened out, or screwdrivers with broken blades should be removed until they can be repaired or replaced.
- **Grip tools firmly** – Hold hand tools securely and tightly when using them so that they won’t slip out of your hand and hurt you or someone close by. Avoid using gloves when you are using tools unless it is absolutely necessary. They are bulky and make gripping tools difficult.

Respect your tools and they will perform efficiently for you and will keep you with all fingers intact.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt./Loss Control Mgr. 1/10/2007
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**PROTECT YOUR HANDS-
YOU NEED THEM TO PICK UP
YOUR
PAY CHECK!!**