



# Weekly Safety Meeting

*Your Safety Is Our Business®*

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## Cuts and Lacerations Safety

Each year millions of workers suffer workplace injuries that could have been prevented. Some of the most common and preventable injuries are cuts and lacerations. Although statistical data differs from study to study, cuts and lacerations often rank as the second or third most frequent workplace injury. Approximately 30 percent of all workplace injuries involve cuts or lacerations and about 70 percent of those injuries are to the hands or fingers.

Most of us will shrug off a routine cut as a minor inconvenience and not think much more about it. However, the skin is designed to protect our body from invasion by foreign organisms that can cause the body harm. If this outer defensive barrier has been penetrated, infection can occur. While localized infection can be painful and interfere with regular activities, it is a more serious matter if blood poisoning develops.

Blood poisoning is caused by the spread of a bacterial infection in your blood. The poison is either the bacteria causing the infection or poisonous substances called toxins that are produced by the bacteria.

Blood poisoning can cause death (it is responsible for 3.6 deaths/100,000 of population). However, in most cases this problem can be avoided with a little care.

### Typical hazards/causes of cuts and lacerations:

- Improper training;
- Lack of established safety procedures;
- Employees in a hurry, taking short cuts or not following safety procedures;
- Failure to wear cut-resistant gloves or wearing improper gloves for the job;
- Contact with metal items such as nails, metal stock, or burrs;
- Hand tools with blades (e.g., knives, box cutters, screwdrivers, chisels);
- Powered machinery with cutting blades, pinch points, chain and sprocket, conveyor belts, rotating parts, motors, presses, lathes;
- Handling sharp objects or material such as glass, sheet metal;
- Improper tool for the job or tool used improperly (e.g., using a screwdriver as a pry bar);
- Tools in poor condition (e.g., cracked or broken handle, dull blade, mushroomed head. or slippery from exposure to oil-based chemicals);
- Missing or improperly adjusted guarding;
- Poor housekeeping, clutter, debris; and
- Poor lighting, reduced visibility.



## Prevention strategies:

The key to preventing cuts and lacerations is keeping body parts away from hazards. Employers should establish work procedures to identify and control exposure to hazards.

Suggested control measures to minimize the risk of cuts and lacerations include:

- Training employees to use established safety procedures;
- Maintaining proper machine guarding;
- Using lockout/tagout procedures;
- Wearing personal protective equipment;
- Safe tool use; and
- Good housekeeping.

Most minor cases can be treated with basic first aid. Wash the wound with clean soap and water. Apply an antiseptic. Cover the wound with a bandage to prevent further contamination and do your best to keep it clean and dry. You may have to change the bandage several times during the day and even avoid certain wet or dirty jobs. More serious cuts will require professional care. Medical attention will also be required if you observe reddish streaks traveling out from the injury site or if you experience shaking chills, a rapid temperature rise, rapid, pounding heart beat, and warm flushed skin. These are a few typical symptoms of blood poisoning.

**Safety - it's in your hands!!**



## Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests