



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

# Weekly Safety Meeting

---

## Picking the Proper Glove

Your hands are one of your most valuable assets. Without them, you wouldn't be able to touch, hold, feel, write, or gesture. In fact, you couldn't do much of anything. Too often, however, we take them for granted. We don't pay attention to how we treat or mistreat them! Just a few examples of when your hands should be protected: whenever you are cutting, painting, welding, or handling sharp metal, chemicals, needles, or blood samples. And it is very important to wear the right glove for each specific task since no one glove protects against all hazards.

Hand injuries account for approximately 1/3 of all disabling job-related injuries each year. Over 80% of these injuries are caused by pinch points. These injuries are of all kinds--cuts, bruises, fractures, and amputations. Approximately 20% of these injuries become infected. Hand injuries are most common in the construction, manufacturing, and processing industries.

OSHA - General requirements: Employers shall select and require employees to use appropriate hand protection when employees' hands are exposed to hazards such as those from skin absorption of harmful substances, severe cuts or lacerations, severe abrasions, punctures, chemical burns, thermal burns, and harmful temperature extremes.

### Causes of hand injuries:

- Punctures, cuts, or lacerations – caused by contact with sharp, spiked, or jagged edges on equipment, tools, or materials;
- Crushed, fractures, or amputations – caused by contact with gears, belts, wheels and rollers, falling objects, and rings, gloves or clothing getting caught and putting your hand in harm's way;
- Strains, sprains, and other musculoskeletal injuries – caused by using the wrong tool for the job, or one that is too big, small or heavy for your hand;
- Burns – caused by direct contact with a hot surface or a chemical; and
- Dermatitis and other skin disorders – caused by direct contact with chemicals in products and materials.

### Hands can be shielded by one or more of the following:

1. Cotton work gloves for general rig use;
2. Dielectric rubber gloves for electrical hazards (must be tested regularly for dielectric strength);
3. Leather gloves for sparks, heat, chips, and handling rough objects;
4. Welding gloves for welding and foundry gloves for foundry work;

5. Heat-resistant gloves for burn protection;
6. Metal mesh gloves for cut protection;
7. Water resistant gloves for wet environments; and
8. Impervious materials such as rubber, neoprene, nitrile, PVC and vinyl gloves to handle chemicals or infectious agents (always check to determine which polymer is most resistant to the specific chemicals handled).

Gloves need to provide enough dexterity to perform work safely and efficiently. Some glove materials stiffen in cold weather and can hinder dexterity. Where great dexterity is not required and workers need both chemical and cut protection, supported polymer gloves may be the best choice since they are comfortable and durable. Supported polymer gloves have a cotton liner reinforcing an outer polymer lattice.

Gloves that are too big can make hazards worse by increasing the likelihood that the wearer will get caught on something, drop something, or work slowly or unsuccessfully. Finally, the grip should be considered when selecting gloves.

### **Remember:**

Hands are always on the job and need protection against hazards. Wear the proper gloves or other hand protection and take every precaution to protect your hands against injury, burns, and exposure to hazardous substances.

**Keep a grip on life and practice hand safety.**

