



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Safety with Hand Power Tools

Failing to properly use and maintain electric-powered tools causes thousands of cuts, punctures, pinches, amputations, and electrocutions each year. Tools can seriously injure or kill the user if not properly maintained or used. Everyone who uses tools must learn to recognize the hazards associated with the different types of tools and the safety precautions necessary to prevent those hazards. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has specific rules for power tool safety.

Accidents involving portable power tools happen all the time. You've all heard of cases where a chip flew off a drill and hit someone's eye or of someone getting a shock because a tool had a faulty ground. And then there's the person who lost a finger because the guard on the circular saw did not return. In one recent year, there were more than 800 OSHA citations for violations of power tools standards (both general industry and construction), with penalties totaling well over half a million dollars.

There are more than 100,000 hospital emergency room visits each year in the United States due to power tool accidents.

In California alone, power tools cause more than 1,500 injuries each year that result in lost workdays.

Safe Work Procedures:

First of all, you have to know the tool well enough to know when it is right and when it is wrong for a specific job. Too many accidents are a result of people trying to force a tool to do something it was never intended to do. You've got to understand the limitations of any power tool you operate. At the same time, never underestimate its power. Portable power tools can be lethal if used improperly.

Once you're sure you've selected the right tool for the job, it's vital that you know how to use it properly. Reading the manufacturer's instructions is a good start. And if you're completely unfamiliar with the tool, talk to someone else who has used it.

Understanding how to use it does not mean that you're ready to turn it on. Again, you have to know the tool. Look at it closely.

Make sure to do a pre-use inspection to ensure that:

- It's not missing any parts, especially safety guards;
- There are no loose or dull blades;
- The plug and cord insulation are intact;
- There are no defects or cracks in the tool housing; and
- Guards and safety shut-off switches are in good working order.

This kind of inspection should be done every time you start an operation using a power tool.

So now you know you've got the right tool for the job and know the tools are in good operating condition.

The next thing you want to do is think about what kind of protective gear you'll need. Usually, this is no big deal. But if you're working with a tool that will generate dust, shavings, or flying particles, you better put on a pair of safety glasses or goggles. About 90,000 work-related disabling eye injuries occur every year. Keep that in mind before you start thinking goggles are a waste of time.

While we're on the subject of what to wear, let me also stress what you should not wear. As a general rule, don't wear loose clothing or jewelry when you're using power tools. It's just too easy for them to get caught in the equipment or to pull you into it.

After you know the tool well enough to know how to dress for it, you're ready to get moving except for a final precaution before turning on the power--double check the emergency shut-off. Power tools should stop when you release your finger from the switch. You don't want to wait until a tool is working its way through your hand before you try to find the power shut-off.

When Using the Tool:

- Do not use electric-powered tools in damp or wet locations.
- Keep guards in place, in working order, and properly adjusted. Safety guards must never be removed when the tool is being used.
- Avoid accidental starting. Do not hold a finger on the switch button while carrying a plugged-in tool.
- Safety switches must be kept in working order and must not be modified. If you feel it necessary to modify a safety switch for a job you're doing, use another tool.
- Work areas should have adequate lighting and be free of clutter.
- Observers should remain a safe distance away from the work area.
- Be sure to keep good footing and maintain good balance.
- Do not wear loose clothing, ties, or jewelry when operating tools.
- Wear appropriate gloves and footwear while using tools.

Using a power tool can make your work go more smoothly and easily. With good training, proper maintenance, and safe work habits, power tools boost work efficiency while maintaining worker safety.

DON'T BE A FOOL...INSPECT YOUR ELECTRIC TOOLS!!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

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

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