



Safety Topics

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Safety is our workday mate, keep it with you throughout 2008!

Tell me, and I'll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I'll understand. Native American Proverb

How “HANDy” Are You?

“Hand Safety” from an Indiana Construction Association TOOLBOX TALK.

No matter your occupation, your hands are one of your most important “instruments”. Each year over a quarter of a million people suffer serious and often disabling hand injuries. If we would take a moment to recognize the hazards associated with a particular task, follow established safety guidelines and use proper protective guards, tools and equipment, we could save our hands from injury.

Most hand injuries occur when the hand is unprotected or when known safety practices and procedures are not followed. Some of the most common hand injuries occur when workers:

- ◆ Fail to follow appropriate lock-out procedures;
- ◆ Wear jewelry, gloves or loose-fitting clothing around moving machine parts;
- ◆ Work with chemicals and other irritating substances;
- ◆ Work with electrical hazards; and
- ◆ Perform tasks with repetitive motion that can cause undue stress on the hands and wrists.

Follow these suggestions for hand safety to protect your hands from injury and disability.

- ◆ Be alert to potential hand hazards and prevent injuries before they occur.
- ◆ Be alert to possible unguarded pinch points.
- ◆ Always use push-sticks, guards, shields and other protective devices when appropriate. If a guard must be removed, make sure it is immediately replaced when the task is finished.
- ◆ Use a brush—not your hand— to wipe away debris.
- ◆ Inspect equipment and machinery before and after tasks to make sure that they are in good operating condition.
- ◆ Disconnect power and follow established lock-out procedures before repairing or cleaning machinery.
- ◆ Never wear gloves, jewelry or loose clothing when working with moving machine parts.
- ◆ Do use appropriate personal protective equipment when the task requires.
- ◆ When wearing gloves, be sure they fit properly and are rated for the specific task you are performing.
- ◆ Select tools designed to keep wrists straight to help avoid repetitive motion / overuse problems.

You need your hands as a part of nearly everything you do. When they are damaged or even slightly injured, some of the simple things in life can become quite difficult. Use care when it comes to your hands and then we can all applaud safety together.

