

Safe Hand and Power Tools

Hand and power tools are a common part of our everyday lives and are present in nearly every industry. However, these simple tools can be hazardous and have the potential for causing severe injuries when used or maintained improperly. The employer is responsible for the safe condition of tools and equipment used by employees, but the employees have the responsibility for properly using and maintaining tools.

General Requirements

- Use the right tool for the job.
- Examine all tools for damage before each use. Inspect power cords. If damage is found, take the tool out of service and report the condition to your supervisor.
- Read the tool's instruction manual, and follow use and maintenance guidelines.
- All power tools must have a 3-prong grounded plug or be double-insulated. All power tools must be UL listed.
- Make sure all safety guards and devices are in place.
- Always wear the appropriate personal protective equipment. Safety glasses and gloves should be worn while operating most power tools. Other PPE may also be necessary.
- Avoid using power tools in wet or damp environments. Utilize a GFCI when necessary.
- Do not wear loose clothing, dangling objects or jewelry. Long hair must be restrained.
- Unplug tools before installing, adjusting and changing any accessory or attachment.
- Maintain solid footing and good balance when using tools. Hold or brace the tool securely. Be aware of your surrounding environment.
- Ensure power tool accessories are specific for the tool it's to be used with.



Specific Equipment Requirements

- Keep fingers away from saw blades. Clamp materials down and keep all guards in place.
- **Do not use compressed air to clean people or clothing.**
- When performing electrical work, use insulated, rated tools.
- When using pneumatic tools, a safety clip or retainer must be installed to prevent the equipment or hoses from coming apart. Never point pneumatic tools at anyone.
- All hand grinders must be used with the guards and handles in place.
- The wooden handles of tools must be kept free of splinters or cracks.
- Where flammable atmospheres exist, spark-resistant tools made from brass, plastic, aluminum, or wood will prevent ignition sources.