

Tool Box Talk

HAND TOOL SAFETY

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HAND TOOLS are some of the most commonly used tools on the job. According to the Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, the definition of a hand tool is any hand-held equipment that is powered by the energy of a worker. This means that they are powered through manual labour and human force rather than by electricity. Some examples include hammers, chisels, screw drivers, saws and pliers amongst others.

Generally, the use of hand tools is considered less dangerous than the use of power tools. However, like any tool, hand tools can still pose as a source for potential danger. Hand tools can cause some serious injuries if they are not used with consideration. A combination of proper safe work procedures and selection of correct personal protective equipment is the accepted practice. To avoid injuries, you always want to make sure you use the right tool in the right size for the intended use/job.

Sometimes hand tools can easily become worn out, so one must not get complacent when it comes to simple inspection. Like all other tools and materials on the job, it is important to note any defects found before starting a job. Look for defects such as broken or damaged tools, tools that are dull and/or overused.

Tips for Using Hand Tools Safely:

- Consider using a tool belt for carrying, or using a hoist/rope to transport your tools up a ladder or scaffolding. Never carry your tools in hand when climbing up ladders.
- If you need to pass your tools to a co-worker, do so by using the handle. Never toss or throw a hand tool to another person.
- Always cut in a direction away from your body to avoid abrasions, cuts, or punctures.
- It is good practice to keep track of your tools, and maintain an organized and clean worksite at all times.
- When you are finished with your tools for the day, simply inspect all hand tools before putting them away. Detection of repetitive stress and damage to the tools can help prevent a serious injury.
- It is good practice to maintain and store your tools properly.
- It is very important that all tools be kept clean and sharp in order to avoid injury.

By using these safety precautions, you can help prevent injuries and provide a great example for the workplace.



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