

EH&S Fast Facts

HAND & POWER TOOL SAFETY



All hazards involved in the use of hand and power tools can be prevented. For example, damaged electric tools can be tagged "Do Not Use" and repaired or replaced. Follow the safety tips below to prevent injuries.

Hand Tool Safety

- Wrenches, including adjustable, pipe, end, and socket wrenches, must not be used when jaws are sprung to the point that slippage happens
- Impact tools, such as drift pins, wedges, and chisels, are unsafe if they have mushroom heads
- Wooden handles cannot have splinters or cracks and must be kept tight in the tool
- Sparks produced by iron and steel hand tools can be a danger around flammable substances - spark-resistant tools made from brass, plastic, aluminum, or wood are safer, but are softer and wear down more quickly than ordinary steel tools
- Appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn
- Floors should be kept as clean and dry as possible to prevent accidental slips while carrying hand tools

Power Tool Safety

- Know the power tool - operate according to the manufacturer's instructions
- Keep all tools in good condition with regular maintenance - they should be kept sharp and clean (follow user's manual for lubricating and changing accessories)
- Disconnect tools when not in use, before servicing, and when changing accessories
- Use the right tool for the job
- Examine each tool for damage before use
- Use proper protective equipment - long hair must be restrained, do not wear loose clothing, dangling objects, or jewelry (gloves cannot be used when operating certain power tools- check manuals)
- Ground all tools unless double insulated
- Do not use power tools in damp, wet or explosive atmospheres – with fumes, dust or flammable materials
- Be aware of all power lines and electrical circuits, water pipes, and other mechanical hazards in your work area
- Never carry a tool by the cord/hose, or yank the cord/hose to disconnect it
- Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges
- Secure work with clamps or a vise, freeing both hands to operate the tool
- Avoid accidental starting - do not hold the switch button while carrying a plugged-in tool
- Be sure to keep good foot balance

Visit www.ehs.ucr.edu for additional information or call EH&S at 827-5528 if you have any questions.