

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Cut the Power on Portable Tool Accidents



Portable power tools have completely changed the way we can accomplish jobs that require the use of portable power tools. However, they have also added some new safety concerns. If we recognize these risks and the proper way to deal with them, then they are a great asset to have.

RECOGNIZING RISKS OF POWER TOOLS:

- Contacts with points of operation like blades, as we know, can cause serious cuts or sometimes amputations.
- Electrical malfunctions can cause shocks, fires or electrocutions.
- Dust, flying chips or shavings can cause eye injuries.
- Noise can cause hearing damage.
- A **heavy** power tool dropped on a foot can cause bruises or broken bones.
- Picking up a heavy power tool can cause a possible back injury.
- If you use a power tool in an awkward position for long periods of time, it can cause you to have back injuries or maybe another injury to a body part.

WHY DO THESE POWER TOOL ACCIDENTS HAPPEN?

The Power Tool Institute (PTI) states that there are three main reasons for most power tool injuries:

- **Loss of concentration** – Repetitions with the same piece of equipment lead to the feeling of “rote” operation. This is where the danger starts when we feel that the job is automatic and “**Bam**” we have an accident. We lose concentration.
- **Unexpected Events** – A kickback or other similar incident that is out of the ordinary happens with a fast-moving tool that can be very dangerous. Possibly the operator hasn’t been adequately trained or still lacks sufficient experience to operate this piece of equipment and doesn’t know how to react.
- **Inexperience and overconfidence** – This can combine to make a hazardous situation, if one doesn’t understand the dangers involved and one doesn’t understand the importance of being careful and remaining focused.

**PROTECT YOUR HANDS -
YOU NEED THEM TO PICK UP
YOUR PAY CHECK!!!**

FIVE BASIC SAFETY RULES TO PREVENT ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES:

- Keep all tools in good condition with regular maintenance.
- Use the right tool for the right job.
- Examine the tools before each use. If they are damaged, then obviously we shouldn’t use them.
- Operate all power tools according to the manufacturer’s instruction manual.
- Use the right personal protective equipment, such as goggles or a face shield, hearing protection, possibly a dust mask and good safety shoes.

GOOD SAFETY TIPS WHEN USING POWER TOOLS:

- Make sure all guards are in place before turning on any power tool.
- Don’t ever remove or bypass a guard.
- Don’t use a malfunctioning power tool - turn it in for repairs or get a replacement.
- Don’t handle the power tools with wet or sweaty hands - dry them first or you may get a shock or it could cause you to have a faulty grip.
- Stand on a rubber mat when working with power tools, and this is true especially when you are working in wet or damp areas.
- Always unplug power tools before you do any repair or maintenance on them.
- Keep moving parts and sharp edges away from your body.
- Use a vise or clamp to secure materials so that you can have both hands free to operate the tool.
- Be sure to always turn power off on any tool when you are finished.
- Lift and carry power tools by the handle, not by the cord.
- Be careful to keep your finger off the trigger when you are carrying a plugged-in tool.
- Keep cords off the floor as much as possible so that they don’t become a trip hazard.

Power tools are potentially dangerous and can cause serious and maybe disabling injuries. They are widely used on so many various jobs that operators sometimes may not take the possible hazards that they can cause serious enough.