



MAFES Dawg Tracks

November 23, 2015



Hand Tool Hazard
& Safety Tips



Many thousands of years ago, an unknown caveman picked up a stone which was fastened to a stick with strips of rawhide. He was experimenting with the instrument. He raised it up and brought it down—on his thumb. Thus he was probably the first to experience a hand tool hazard. Since that time people have repeatedly hurt themselves with various types of hand tools. However, today we can avoid these hazards and accidents by being more focused on practicing good safety traits.

Since the advent of hand tools, technology through the years has improved their use and safety to some extent. However, with these improvements, we still experience cuts, bruises, fractures, scrapes and punctures when we don't concentrate on the "business at hand."

EXAMPLES OF HAND TOOL INJURIES-

- ✓ **Cuts, abrasions, amputations and punctures are a few more examples of injuries that can happen if we aren't careful** – Some types of hand tools are made to cut or move metal and wood. Remember what a single slip can do to our fragile human flesh.
- ✓ **Repetitive motion injuries** – Using the same tool all day every day with the same motion, all day long, day after day can stress your ligaments and muscles. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, which is the inflammation of the nerve sheath in the wrist and injuries to the muscles, joints, and ligaments, are increasingly common when the wrong tool is used or even the right tool and holding it the wrong way is used.
- ✓ **Eye injuries** – **Flying** chips of wood or metal is a common hazard, often causing needless and permanent blindness.
- ✓ **Broken Bones and bruises** – Tools can slip, fall from heights - or in a remote circumstance - be thrown by an over-zealous or disgruntled employee, causing severe injuries. A hammer falling from a ladder can be a lethal weapon.

SAFETY TIPS TO AVOID INJURIES-

- **Use the right tool for the job** – Don't use a wrench for a hammer or a screwdriver for a chisel or a punch. Go back to the tool room or tool chest and get the right tool for the job that you're starting.
- **Tools must be in good working condition** – Don't use broken or damaged tools, dull cutting blades, screwdrivers with worn or damaged tips, or punches with mushroom heads, broken handles on hammers etc. If you discover any of these defects on the tools, lay them aside, report them to your supervisor and try to get a replacement. Any tool in good repair makes the job go faster, safer and overall more efficient.
- **When using cutting tools** – Cut in a direction away from your body,
- **Adequate posture** – Make sure you have a firm grip and secure footing when you are using large tools.
- **Carry tools safely** – Carry tools securely in a tool belt or box. Don't carry tools up the ladder with you. Pull them up with a rope or hoist.
- **Keep a close watch on tool location** – Do this to avoid the possibility of dropping one and it possibly hitting a fellow employee. Always pass a tool by its handle and never throw it to them.
- **Use the proper personal protective equipment (PPE)** Follow the company instructions and the MSDS in regards to the correct eyewear, gloves, boots/shoes, etc.
- Always keep your tools in good working condition.
- Store tools in their proper place after you finish a project.
- Refrain from carrying tools with sharp points in your pocket.
- Select ergonomic tools when your work is highly repetitive.
- Watch for signs in work tasks that have repetitive stress motions. You might be able to arrive at a method that will reduce the motion and save a potential injury.

**BE SAFETY SMART RIGHT FROM THE
START!
BROKEN TOOLS CAN BE REPLACED-
YOU CAN'T!!**