

Toolbox Safety Topic

Use and Care of Hand Tools

Improper use and care of hand tools can cause serious injuries, such as cuts/lacerations, puncture wounds, contusions/bruises, eye injuries, etc.. Everyone using hand tools can help prevent such injuries with periodic inspections for defects and damage. Inspect hand tools before each use for obvious defects. You can also prevent an accidents by using the tools for their intended purpose. Screwdrivers are not pry bars, wrenches are not hammers (I'm sure you get the idea here).

If you have personal tools that you use at work, you should inspect, repair, and/or replace them the same as you would university equipment. The objective is to prevent injuries from damaged or defective tools, irregardless of who they belong to.

Here are some examples of **improper** tool use and care:

- Wrenches with worn or sprung jaws.
- Slings or chokers with broken strands.
- Hammers, sledges, and malls with loose handles.
- Gasoline equipment with leaky fuel lines.
- Electrical tools without grounding or double insulation.
- Electrical cords that are frayed or exhibit exposed wiring.
- Using a piece of pipe as a cheater on wrenches.
- Throwing tools up to people working on ladders or scaffolds, etc.
- Carrying knives, screw drivers, and other sharp tools in pockets without protective shields.
- Leaving welding rod stubs laying around on floors and table tops.
- Using ladders with broken rungs or not tying them off at the top when in use.
- Leaving tools on scaffolds where they can be kicked off.

Note: (Discuss what can be done to correct the hazard(s) and assign responsibility at this time so that hazards can be corrected (or improved) before the next meeting.)

Report damaged and defective equipment to your supervisor immediately for repair or replacement. If you are a qualified electrician, you may repair electrical equipment. If you are not, let the professionals take care of it. In many instances, the defective equipment will be replaced. Make sure you remove the defective equipment from the work area to avoid accidental use or tag the equipment with a "Do Not Use" tag.

You should also make sure that tools are properly stored where they cannot become damaged. Don't throw electrical tools into a box, don't leave them out where they are exposed to weather or wet conditions. Don't leave them lying on the floor where traffic could damage the cords.

Only **you** can prevent accidents involving hand tools. Stop and think before using a defective tool and make the right choice – don't use it. Think about the injury that you could incur by using the defective tool AND the person working next to you who also may be injured, or the person who will use the tool after you. Be responsible for your own safety as well as others!

Any questions?

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Date: _____

Meeting Conducted By: _____ Title: _____

Attendees

#	NAME	#	NAME
1		24	
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