

Handyman Safety Meeting Kit



What's At Stake

HANDYMAN DEFINITION

Handymen are workers who have experience with a variety of jobs that are routinely carried out in residential and commercial buildings. They often engage in minor electrical work, plumbing, repairs and other forms of general maintenance. The term handyman describes a paid worker who is compensated to perform specific jobs, which may range from unskilled to highly skilled. Examples of jobs handymen perform include, but are not limited to, painting, drywall repair, remodeling, minor plumbing and electrical work, furniture assembly, etc.

What's the Danger

HANDYMAN RISKS

Electrical Hazards. Electrical appliances can pose a hazard once damaged. Don't use broken items and call an electrician as soon as possible if you suspect that something is wrong. Schedule a regular electrical system inspection as well, to prevent electrical problems from happening again.

Cuts. Common kitchen items, like peelers, knives and graters can injure anyone. Keep these sharp items out of reach of children and store and lock them away properly. You also need to store your rakes, saws and lawn mowers correctly, and keep your razor locked in a cabinet when you don't use them. Point knives and forks down in the utensil basket, as well.

Slips or Falls. A study shows that one out of five adults who fall sustain bone and head injuries. A room where there are scattered items, slippery materials and wet floors is a fall hazard. Consider minimizing fall risks for older members of the family by adding handrails and safety gates around potentially dangerous areas. Make sure all rooms in your house have adequate lighting to reduce the risk of falls, as well.

Poisoning. Harmful chemicals can cause headaches, dizziness, vomiting and even failing vision. Keep all household cleaners in a locked container and out of reach when you don't need them. Store medications properly to avoid accidental ingestion.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

COMMON INJURIES SUFFERED

Handymen face the risk of suffering a number of different types of injuries. Some of these injuries may be treated with simply a short period of rest. However, certain injuries may require surgery and lengthy rehabilitation, which tends to be financially devastating for the victim as well as his or her family. Some may suffer catastrophic injuries, which means, they would never be able to return to work or earn a livelihood. Handymen suffer a variety of injuries on the job including:

1. Traumatic brain injuries
2. Spinal cord damage
3. Broken bone injuries
4. Loss of vision and hearing
5. Paralysis
6. Soft tissue injuries
7. Muscle strains and sprains
8. Neck and back injuries
9. Concussions
10. Contusions
11. Lacerations
12. Limb and finger amputations

BEST PRACTICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HANDYMEN

1. Pressure Washers Can Peel Your Skin

Pressure washers are the most common handyman tools used to clean up areas like the patio and roof of a building. Since handymen get their attention diverted by a variety of stimuli in the open, they often make the mistake of holding the pressure washer and operating the trigger with only one hand. This can cause the spray wand to move across your hand, peeling the skin off.

1. Bump-Nailing Can Nail Your Feet

The use of a framing nailers for fastening plywood to joints is a common practice for handymen. But when the nailers is set in bump mode, you need to be fully attentive, for forgetting to pushing the nose of the gun properly against the wood can lead to serious injuries. The worst, you may bump the nose of the gun at the wrong spot such as one of your own feet! Make sure you've properly bumped the gunpoint on the target area before you pull the trigger.

1. Safety against Electric Shocks is Important

One of the most important safety steps at a repair site is to check electricity wires using a non-contact tester before laying a hand on them. Commonly, handymen take off the fuse in a hurry and start disconnecting the wires from outlets. There maybe two circuits linked to the outlet, of which you have turned off only one. So, when you touch the wires barehanded, you'll get knocked back by a powerful shove of electricity shooting up your entire body!

1. Sheet Metal Can Slice Your Body Parts

Drilling holes in pieces of metals is another common handyman duty involving a great deal of risk. Handymen are often in a rush and don't take time to compress the metal to a table etc. This can cause the drill to be caught by the sheet and thrown onto you, creating a deep rip on one of your body parts.

HANDYMAN SAFETY OVERVIEW

- Read the safety data sheets (SDS) or the manufacturer's package instructions on every chemical you use. Inspect your hand and power tools before each use. Make sure they are in proper working order.
- Get training so you can spot building materials and locations that may contain

asbestos materials. Use safe and compliant work practices around asbestos. Get certification in order to conduct compliant lead renovation work properly.

- You may cover a lot of territory while doing your work, so get familiar with field safety concepts such as safe driving, handling aggressive dogs, snakes, ticks, stinging insects, and poison oak and ivy.
- You will need a variety of clothing and PPE to suit each job you do. Wear lightweight layers with long sleeves and pants. Wear sturdy work boots with a heel and non-slip sole. Keep a PPE kit stocked with a nuisance dust mask, respirator, safety glasses, earplugs and muffs, a variety of gloves, and a hardhat.

FINAL WORD

There are many tools of the trade that may hurt rather than help handymen, especially if those tools are defective. Inspection and sound maintenance practices is right antidote to eliminate shoddy and defective tools and equipment.