Power Tool Safety Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Power tools get jobs done with efficiency and reduced effort. But with power comes responsibility. Power tools can cause injury and even death if they are not used properly.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

DANGERS/HAZARDS OF POWER TOOLS

Power tools make work quicker and require less physical effort from the user. However, with these benefits also comes risk. Power tools are powerful, and when accidents happen, they can cause serious injuries. Only trained workers should use power tools on the job. Training should include reviewing the instruction manual, how to inspect the tools before each use, and following the manufacturer's maintenance schedule.

The following hazards are associated with different power tool categories:

- Electric tools present the risk of electrical burns and shocks (even a relatively small electric current can lead to death, and shocks at a height can lead to falls)
- Abrasive wheel tools can throw off flying fragments that injure the eyes, face and other body parts
- Pneumatic tools have several risks, including flying fragments, getting hit by an attachment or fastener.
- Hydraulic power tools, when their recommended load limits are exceeded, can lead to a collapsed load.
- Liquid fuel tools typically run on gasoline, which can burn, explode and give off dangerous fumes
- Powder actuated tools are similar to a loaded gun and present the same risks, including penetration, ricochet and explosion injuries as well as hearing damage.

Environmental Hazards – dust, fumes, gases, water, light and other restrictions.

- Is the environment safe for the use of the tool?
- Are any additional checks required?
- Is the tool protected from any hazards?
- Is the environment suitable for the tool user?

Specific Hazards of Workers

- Electrical shock
- Cuts & amputations
- Eye injuries
- Amputations
- Trip & Fall Hazards
- Puncture Wounds

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS FOR WORKERS TO PREVENT HAZARDS FROM POWER TOOL OPERATIONS

- Never carry a tool by the cord or hose.
- Never yank the cord or the hose to disconnect it from the receptacle.
- Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges.
- Disconnect tools when not using them, before servicing and cleaning them.
- Keep all people not involved with the work at a safe distance from the work area.
- Secure work with clamps or a vise, freeing both hands to operate the tool.
- Avoid accidental starting. Do not hold fingers on the switch button while carrying a plugged-in tool.
- Maintain tools with care; keep them sharp and clean for best performance.
- Follow instructions in the user’s manual for lubricating and changing accessories.
- Be sure to keep good footing and maintain good balance when operating power tools.
- Wear proper apparel for the task. Loose clothing, ties, or jewelry can become caught in moving parts.
- Remove all damaged portable electric tools from use and tag them: “Do Not Use.”

PPE – LAST LINE OF DEFENSE

Personal protective wear needed when using power tools includes:

- Safety glasses and/or face shields to protect the eyes and face from flying debris.
- Goggles to keep splashing liquids out of the eyes.
- Hearing protection to minimize exposure to noisy tools.
- A respirator to protect against inhaling fumes and particulates.
- Snug fitting gloves.
- Anti-vibration gloves to prevent tissue damage from vibrating tools.
- Safety shoes to protect feet from falling materials and tools.

GOOD WORK HABITS, SOUND HOUSEKEEPING AND SAFE WORK PRACTICES IN THE USE OF POWER TOOLS

- Use the correct tool for the job.
- Keep the work area clean, organized, and well lit.
- Stay alert when you use power tools.
- Be aware of where you place your hands at all times and keep them away from moving parts.
- Tie back hair, wear snug clothing, and remove jewelry that could get caught in tools.
- Clamp, secure, and support work materials to a solid surface.
- Don’t hold materials by hand or against your body while working on them.
- Let tools power up completely before contacting stock material.
- Don’t touch tool parts until they come to a complete stop and are completely cool.
- Don’t force the tool against the material or to do the work.

FINAL WORD

Using a power tool can make your work go more smoothly and easily. With good training, proper maintenance, and safe work habits, power tools boost work efficiency while maintaining worker safety.