

NASA - LaRC SAFETY NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICE OF SAFETY AND FACILITY
ASSURANCE, OSEMA

JANUARY 1998

HAND TOOL SAFETY

Hand tools and portable power tools may be a familiar part of your everyday work life. For this very reason, it's easy to forget that they can be dangerous if used improperly. For example, a simple screwdriver can slip and cause a puncture wound, and an ungrounded electric drill can cause a serious shock. You probably already know how to operate most hand and power tools. Take a moment now to make sure you know how to operate them safely.

TOOL SAFETY RULES

- Use the right tool for the job, and make sure it's the right size for the job. When you use a wrench as a hammer, or a knife as a screwdriver, you risk damaging the tool, the material being worked on and yourself.
- Keep your tools in good condition. A clean, sharp tool is a safe tool. A tool with a greasy handle or dull cutting edge can slip and cause injury.
- Learn the correct way to use a tool. There is typically one right way and many wrong ways to use a tool. Don't assume you'll know how to use a new or unfamiliar tool correctly. If you don't know, ask.
- Follow common-sense tool rules. Always cut away from yourself. Pull on a wrench, don't push it. Never modify a tool to increase its leverage or force.
- Use tools thoughtfully, with awareness and patience. Don't rush, don't daydream, and don't horse around.
- Carry and store tools safely. Carry tools with the sharp parts pointed down and away from you. Store tools in a clean, dry place to keep them free of grease, dust and rust.

PLAY IT EXTRA SAFE WITH POWER TOOLS

Power tools make it possible to do many tasks quickly and efficiently. But because they use electricity and have fast-moving parts, you must exercise caution when using them. In addition to standard safe-tool practices, follow these tips when working with portable power tools.

- Dress for safety. Remember your hands and eyes are your most important tools. When you use saws or grinders, wear protective clothing to prevent cuts and burns. Always wear safety glasses when there is danger of flying wood, metal or particles.
- Inspect and test. Before you use any power tool, check it for broken parts or loose bolts. If you're using a tool with a sharp edge, use a scrap of wood, not your fingers, to test its sharpness.
- Start from the "OFF" position. Before plugging in a power tool, check the power switch to make sure it's in the "OFF" position. Make sure that the tool has stopped before you unplug or put it down.

- Prevent shock. Be sure your tool is properly grounded and double-insulated. Keep cords away from heat, sharp objects and chemicals that could damage their insulation. Keep your work area dry. If you must work in a wet area, keep the power cord clear of wet surfaces or use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

PUT YOUR TOOLS TO WORK FOR YOU

Hand and power tools are designed to work for you and make your job easier. When used properly they will help minimize errors and maximize safety.

SAFETY CLASSES OFFERED

Just a reminder that the following safety training classes are available to be presented for you at your safety meetings.

Confined Spaces (permit required)
Confined Space Awareness
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Ergonomics (Office or Industrial)
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
Heat Stress
Cryogenics
Chemical Safety (Chemical Refresher)
General Office Safety

If you would like to setup a class, contact your supervisor and he can schedule by contacting Butch Jones at 4-8743.