



SAFETY SHORTS

HAND INJURY PREVENTION

Your hands are vulnerable to cuts, bruises, burns, electrical shock, chemical exposure, and even amputation. The most effective control to prevent injury is to remove the hazard altogether or “engineer it out”. When this is not practical, administrative controls such as safety policies/procedures and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used.

To come up with a list on how to protect your hands in each and every situation would be impossible, so do the smart thing: ask the “**what if**” question. What if the item I’m lifting has sharp or ragged edges? What if the wrench slips? What if this chemical gets on my hands? Before you begin a project or pick up a tool or start a piece of equipment, think of the accident that **CAN** and **WILL** happen unless **you** make sure it doesn’t.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING HAND INJURIES

- Be familiar with your employer’s personal protective equipment (PPE) policy and use gloves and safety equipment provided.
- Remove rings, watches or other jewelry when operating power tools or working on equipment and machinery.
- Use the correct gloves for the exposure. Make sure the gloves you wear provide protection for the work you are doing. When working with chemicals consult the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).
- Never wear gloves near machine gears or other devices in which gloves might get caught. Replace gloves that are stretched, ragged or torn.
- After completing maintenance, replace all machine guards on equipment.
- Keep guards in place and always use a “feather board” or push stick when working with table saws to keep your fingers away from the blade.
- When using knives, keep the blades well sharpened, cut away from yourself and others, and use a retractable blade whenever possible.
- Pay special attention to round or cylindrical parts that are unstable when placing them on a floor or bench. Use a roll stopper for them without fail.
- Use extra caution around “pinch points” such as hinged doors, gears and ladders, and tailgates.
- Wash your hands often! Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent spread of disease and infections. The use of gloves is not a substitute for hand washing.



***Your hands are the most important “Tool” you use.
Please take care of them!***