

# **Hand Tools**

## **A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS**

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

### **DURING THE MEETING**

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

## **Hand Tools**

Many accidents and injuries can be avoided by keeping your tools in good condition and using them collectively. It is a good rule to inspect your tools before and after using them, looking for defects that could cause an injury.

Defective tools should be returned to the tool crib so that they can be repaired or replaced.

### **CROWBARS**

Use a crowbar for prying, but select the correct size for the job. Do not try to increase the leverage by using a length of pipe or iron bar.

### **FILES**

When using a file, have secure footing before applying pressure. Grasp the file with one hand and guide the point of the file with the thumb and forefinger of the other hand.

Use a vise to secure the material being filed, and use an offset handle if it is available. Clean a file with a file card, not by striking it against another piece of metal, tool particles can fly off. Equip the file with an approved handle.

### **HAMMERS**

When replacing hammer handles, make sure they fit the hammer head. Wedge the handle securely in the head and make sure that it is free of splinters and cracks.

Never strike hardened steel surfaces with a steel hammer. Use a soft metal hammer or one with a plastic, wood or rawhide head. Always wear safety glasses to protect your eyes from flying chips, nail heads or scale.

Inspect sledge hammers carefully at regular intervals for split handles and loose or chipped heads. Use riveting hammers for sheet steel, carpenter or claw hammers for driving and pulling nails, and ball-peen hammers for metal work.

### **HOOKS**

Keep hand hooks sharp to prevent them from slipping. Shield the point of the hook with a one-inch piece of rubber hose, or carry it in a specially designed sheath. The point of the hook can also be pressed into a small cork to avoid puncture injuries.

## **JACKS**

Check the capacity plate to determine the lifting power of the jack, and remove the handle when moving the jack.

Make sure the jack's holding structure is in good condition--broken teeth are hazardous. Place the jack on a level surface and securely anchor the base with nailed blocks or wedge. The jack can also be secured with ropes.

Remove the jack handle after reaching the desired elevation; otherwise, the handle could be struck, causing the jack to topple from under the load.

Watch for leaks in hydraulic jacks, because oil and grease on the bottom of the jack is particularly hazardous.

Wear safety shoes and keep oil and grease off your hands when working with a jack. Use plenty of blocking to support the load after it has been raised.

## **PLIERS**

Apply pressure directly across the line of cut when using pliers. Never substitute pliers for a wrench or a hammer because pliers chew up nut and bolt heads. In addition, pliers cannot grip nut or bolt securely.

Electricians should use hand-insulating grips. Make sure the protective covering are free of crack, holes or broken pieces.

Hold the coil or length of wire securely in a vise when cutting it with plier.

Hold the open end of the wire with your free hand to prevent the cut-off end from flying.

If a vise unavailable, kneel on the floor and hold the wire with one foot.

Always wear safety glasses when cutting wire.

## **SCRAPERS**

Keep scraper sharpened, in good condition and store them in special rack to protect the edge.

### **SCREWDRIVERS**

When driving screw into wall objects, hold the objects in a vise. When performing electrical work, never use a screwdriver with a haft that extends all the way through the handle.

Pay particular attention to the tip size when selecting screwdriver; the tip should fit snugly in the slot of the screw. Do not use a twisted screwdriver tip because it could slip and cause an injury. Never use a screwdriver as a punch, wedge, pinch bar, pry or chisel.

### **WRENCHES**

When placing an adjustable wrench on a nut, make sure the adjustable jaw face you; then pull the wrench toward you. Use socket wrenches for hard-to-reach places.

Never use a pipe wrench on nuts because the corner of the nuts or bolts are likely to break the teeth of the wrench jaws, making it unsafe for future use.

Manufacturers make wrench of different sizes, so the amount of leverage obtained with the wrench handle is the maximum application; it is unsafe to add more leverage with a length of pipe, for example.

#### **Note to Discussion Leader:**

If other kinds of hand tools are used in your particular operation, you may want to include them in this discussion. The list of tools provided in this talk is by no means complete.