Getting a Hand on safety Meeting Kit

KEEP HANDS SAFE IN THE WORKPLACE – HAND SAFETY STARTS IN THE HEAD

Pay attention! Two simple words that demand action, issue a warning, and perhaps even save you from serious injury or death. It is hard to maintain focus.

Minds wander. It's part of our nature as human beings. You come to work, grab a quick cup of coffee and start on your first task of the day: cutting plywood. Before you know it, you've mentally reviewed half of your to-do list, fantasized about your upcoming vacation, practiced the talk you need to have with your boss, and… cut off your little finger!

Routine tasks lull us into a sense of safety. "I know what I'm doing. I don't need to pay close attention." Maintaining your concentration when you're tired, bored, or distracted is extremely difficult, but even more critical to staying safe. In order to practice hand safety at work, **start with your head.**

ENSURE BEFORE EVERY TASK, ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO AVOID HAND INJURY

- Do you know the hand hazards of performing the task? What hazards could be in the place that you are about to put your hands and fingers?
- Is the right tool being used for the job?
- Have you been trained on the correct use of the tool you are using?
- Has unexpected movement from the tool, part or material which could result in a line of fire injury been considered?

- Have you asked yourself what can go wrong?
- What happens if the tool slips? Is there anything you might hit? Could you cut yourself on anything?
- Can you get burned?
- If there is a liquid, could it be harmful to your skin or body?
- Have you protected your hands and fingers with the right PPE?

COMMON HAND AND FINGER HAZARDS

- Heavy machinery
- Hand and power tools
- Electrical equipment
- Extremely hot or cold environments
- Chemicals

COMMON TYPES OF GLOVES

- General use gloves, which are ideal for light material handling and cleanup
- Leather gloves, which can protect against sparks, burns, moderate temperatures, and rough objects or surfaces
- Chemical-resistant gloves, which can protect against different chemical hazards
- Cut-resistant gloves, which can protect against cuts, punctures and lacerations
- Anti-vibration gloves, which can protect against fatigue from vibrating equipment, like chainsaws and jackhammers
- Electrically-insulating gloves, which can protect against electrical hazards such as live wires

HOW EMPLOYEES CAN PROTECT HANDS AT WORK

- Wear protective clothing and don’t take it off.
- Use appropriate work gloves when handling rough materials

and when hands are directly involved with lifting or moving objects. Make sure the work gloves offer the right combination of dexterity and protection needed for the job/task.

- Take time to remove or bend down protruding nails, splinters and sharp edges on materials before you begin working with them.
- Always use machinery guards.
- When moving objects with a hand cart or truck, make sure that you have sufficient room to get through doorways and small spaces with enough clearance for cart and hands.
- Keep hands free of grease and oil – slippery hands can get you in trouble. If you get grease or oil on your hands, clean them right away.
- For safety's sake, do not wear any rings when working – a ring caught in machinery or on a protruding object can badly damage a finger.
- Wear gloves to pick up broken glass, nails or other sharp objects – including when sweeping up. Never attempt to handle these things with your bare hands.
- Keep your hands in places where you can see them. Avoid putting them out of your line of sight.
- Work smarter rather than working faster.
- Do not count on your reflexes to save your hands and fingers.

FINAL WORD

Being tired, bored, or distracted in the workplace means you are not concentrating on work tasks to the extent you should. This is where and when workplace accidents occur. Hands and fingers injuries are often the result.