

News & Notes

Mark of a Craftsman

Everybody uses tools at some time or other, even if it's just to hammer a nail, turn a screw, or chop some wood. Although tools have different functions and some may be hand tools while others are power tools, the same basic safety rules apply to all of them whether you use them on the job or at home:

➔ **Select the right tool for the job.**

Never use a screwdriver as a chisel, knife, or lever, for instance. Don't risk a serious injury by using an ax or a heavy pipe wrench as a hammer. Use tools for only the specific purpose for which they are intended.

➔ **Inspect tools before use.** Make sure they're in good condition and safe to use. Get replacements for broken or defective tools rather than trying to use them, which could be dangerous.

➔ **Use tools correctly.** Hold them properly, apply the right amount of force, and keep your other hand clear. Follow safety directions in the instruction manual for power tools.

➔ **Take good care of your tools.** Keep them clean and sharp, and store them properly. Don't store pointed or sharp tools in a way you or someone else could be injured when reaching for them in a toolbox or tool crib.

➔ **Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** That almost always means safety glasses to protect your eyes from chips and particles. It might also mean safety shoes and gloves. For some power tools, hearing protection might also be a good idea.

➔ **Transport tools safely.** Carry them in a toolbox, tool belt, bucket, or cart.

➔ **Pay attention while using tools.** Focus on what you're doing. A moment's inattention could end up in an accident and severe injury.

Prevent injuries when using tools by always putting safety first.



RIDDLE OF THE MONTH

You and a friend decide to have an egg spinning contest. What can you do to make sure that your egg spins the longest?

Answer on page 2 in Safety Bits & Pieces.

Safety Matters



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What Are the Causes of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)?

Workplace MSDs are caused by exposure to the following risk factors:

- ☒ **Repetition.** Doing the same motions over and over again places stress on the muscles and tendons.
- ☒ **Forceful exertions.** Forced physical effort required to perform a task or to control equipment or tools.
- ☒ **Awkward postures.** Awkward postures include repeated or prolonged reaching, twisting, bending, kneeling, squatting, working overhead with hands or arms, or holding fixed positions.
- ☒ **Contact stress.** Pressing the body against a hard or sharp edge can result in placing too much pressure on nerves, tendons, and blood vessels. Using the palm of your hand as a hammer, for example, increases your risk of an MSD.
- ☒ **Vibration.** Operating vibrating tools such as sanders, grinders, chippers, drills, and saws can lead to nerve damage.

What are the Symptoms of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)?

Workers suffering from MSDs may experience less strength for gripping and less range of motion. In extreme cases, a person may experience loss of muscle function and inability to do everyday tasks.

Common symptoms include:

- ☹ Painful joints
- ☹ Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- ☹ Shooting or stabbing pains in arms or legs
- ☹ Swelling, inflammation, burning sensation
- ☹ Pain in wrists, shoulders, forearms, knees
- ☹ Fingers or toes turning white
- ☹ Back or neck pain, stiffness

Tips to Prevent Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)

In order to prevent musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) such as low back strain, tendinitis and carpal tunnel syndrome use this checklist to make sure you are working in an ergonomically safe way:

- * Stretch before your shift.
- * Organize your workstation to minimize physical strain.
- * Rotate jobs whenever possible to give your body rest from repetitive motions.
- * Pace yourself and take scheduled work breaks.
- * Select handtools that are appropriate for the job and offer a comfortable grip.
- * Perform jobs with wrists straight (not bent) whenever possible.
- * Grasp objects using your full hand and all your fingers.
- * Avoid clothes and jewelry that are tight around the wrist.
- * Carry materials with a palms-down grip.
- * Periodically stretch and shake out your hands and fingers.
- * Use power tools instead of hand tools whenever possible on repetitive jobs.

Safety Bits and Pieces

NEW EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

With technology advancing so swiftly, we need to keep up with the times, and that often means getting new equipment that will help us improve productivity. But new equipment can also introduce new hazards.

Use this checklist to safely operate new equipment.

- Do you know the hazards associated with this equipment?
- Do you have the required personal protective equipment (PPE) to work safely?
- Are there any materials close to the equipment that could get caught in the equipment's moving parts, catch fire, or cause other problems?
- Are guards and safety devices in place and operating properly?
- Are you following the recommended start-up procedure?
- Are you loading/feeding the equipment correctly?
- Are you operating the equipment properly and within established tolerances?
- Are you using this equipment only for its intended purpose?
- Would you recognize any signs that the equipment is malfunctioning?
- Do you know to whom you should report equipment problems?
- Are you following the recommended shutdown procedure?

Never operate any equipment unless you are trained and authorized. There are too many hazards associated with most equipment for inexperienced people to use it.

KEEP ON TOP OF CHANGES

Even though your job might be pretty much the same from day to day, there are still changes over time that could affect your safety. For example:

- ◆ New procedures may be introduced.
- ◆ New equipment may be installed or old equipment may be upgraded.
- ◆ New employees may join the work team, and some of them may be inexperienced or lack knowledge about safety hazards and required precautions.
- ◆ New chemicals or materials may be used in your work area.

In addition, over the course of a workday, combustible trash or scrap may build up and cause a fire hazard. Or a co-worker might leave tools or other items lying around that create a tripping hazard. Someone might spill something and fail to clean it up. You could come along and slip.

Just because a hazard wasn't there yesterday or an hour ago doesn't mean it isn't there now. Keep your eyes open! And be especially careful in other parts of the facility where you might not be as familiar with hazards as you are in your own work area. Always be aware of your surroundings to prevent accidents and be safe!

RIDDLE OF THE MONTH ANSWER

Boil your egg first!

Electrical Hazards

What to look for

Electrical hazards can give shocks, cause burns, and start destructive fires. Prevent injuries and damage on the job by recognizing, fixing, or reporting electrical hazards. Here's what to look for:

- Ⓜ Overloaded outlets
- Ⓜ Electrical equipment that runs hot
- Ⓜ Electrical equipment that isn't properly grounded
- Ⓜ Switches that feel warm or cause a shock or tingling sensation on contact
- Ⓜ Smoking or sparking equipment or receptacles, the smell of burning wires, or crackling sounds around electrical equipment or receptacles
- Ⓜ Loose connections
- Ⓜ Damaged plugs, cords, or receptacles
- Ⓜ Water on or near electrical equipment, cords, and outlets
- Ⓜ Metal ladders or tools near electrical sources
- Ⓜ Flammable or combustible materials near electrical sources
- Ⓜ Tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses
- Ⓜ Extension cords used as permanent wiring
- Ⓜ Electrical cords in walkways where people could trip over them

If you see or sense any potential electrical hazards, take immediate action. If you can safely cut the power to the equipment or receptacle, do that first. Then, report the problem to your supervisor, and leave the repair job to a qualified electrician.

Safety Tip of the Month

If your power goes out, keep the freezer and refrigerator closed as much as possible. A full refrigerator will maintain safe temperatures for up to six hours. Discard at-risk refrigerated foods that are warmer than 45 degrees. When in doubt, throw it out!

Quotation of the Month

"The only people who never fail are those who never try."

Og Mandino

On the Lighter Side

A kangaroo kept escaping from his enclosure at the zoo. Knowing how high he could hop, the keepers erected a new ten-foot high fence, but the following morning the kangaroo had got out again. So they put up a 20-foot fence, but still the kangaroo managed to escape. Watching all this, the llama in the next enclosure said, "How high do you think they'll go?" The kangaroo replied: "It doesn't matter unless someone locks the gate at night!"

Eye Safety Quiz

Are you working to protect your vision?

Circle T for True or F for False for each statement below.

1. Eyewear for protection against flying objects should be equipped with side shields. **T F**
2. Regular safety glasses will protect your eyes adequately from dust, vapors, fumes, and mists. **T F**
3. When protective eyewear lenses become pitted or scratched so that you cannot see through them clearly, they should be replaced. **T F**
4. Always select eye protection that protects you against the minimum level of potential hazard. **T F**
5. Inspect your eye protection for damage at least once a week. **T F**
6. If you get a particle in your eye, rub the eye until tears wash the particle out. **T F**

Answers:

(1) True. Goggles are good, too, and a face shield over goggles or safety glasses offers extra protection. (2) False. Use offset ventilated safety goggles with a face shield. (3) True. (4) False. Always select eye protection that protects against the *maximum* level of potential hazard. (5) False. Inspect eye protection daily before use. (6) False. *Never* rub the eye. Instead, flush with water until the particle comes out. If it doesn't rinse out, cover the eye and get medical attention.