

Hand Operated Tools and Equipment

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Hand operated tools and equipment are involved in a large number of accidents each year. There were more than 11,000 claims for hand-tool injuries, 8 percent of all claims filed with an average of 1-35 days lost from work for each claim. Workers have experienced eye injuries, severe laceration and puncture wounds, broken bones, electrocution and have been caught in tool mechanisms as a result of working with hand tools and equipment.

Note for Discussion Leader

Customize your talk to the workers' specific job functions. If you know the percentage or number of hand-tool injuries in your department, present the figures. Organize the discussion using the questions and answers given as a guide. Do not attempt to identify cases at this point in the discussion, and try never to find fault.

Question

What injuries, accidents or near misses have workers in this department had while using hand tools or equipment?

Answer

If no instances are brought up and you know of none, use these examples: A maintenance worker uses adjustable pliers instead of a socket wrench or box wrench to loosen a nut; a worker uses a claw hammer to strike a cold chisel with a mushroomed head; or a worker uses an electric power tool that has the grounding conductor removed.

Question

What are the most frequent causes of hand-tool and equipment accidents?

Answer

1. Using hand tools improperly or abusing the equipment--grinding a piece of stock on the side of a grinding wheel instead of using the front surface, or using the back of a drill motor as a hammer.

2. Using the wrong tool or piece of equipment for the particular job, using a screwdriver as a pry bar or chisel, or using a pipe wrench to loosen a nut.
3. Using unsafe tools, cutting tools such as axes, bits, chisels or knives that are dull, or electrical tools with worn or cut cord insulation exposing the conductors.

Ask the group to recall instances where tools or equipment were misused, the wrong tool was used or equipment was in poor or unsafe condition. Be prepared to cite several instances (without finding fault) that you are aware of, or areas where you have concerns, to supplement information from the group.

Demonstrate safe use of a tool found in your department. Review the following safe work practices, reinforcing that you consider them minimum standards for working safely with hand tools or equipment.

1. Use the right tool or piece of equipment for the job.
2. Use only tools in safe condition.
3. Tools and equipment must be used properly and not abused.
4. Never apply a hand tool to a piece of moving machinery.
5. Before starting a job, ask, 'What could possibly go wrong?' and, 'How could the job be done safer?'

Close the discussion by asking for questions or concerns. Make sure that the workers understand that you are concerned about their safety and health. If the employees have questions regarding safety procedures, tell where copies of the procedures are located, or how they can get information. Above all, if you do not know the answer to a question, say so. And then get the answer to them as soon as possible.

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Comments:
