



# Hand & Portable Power Tools

Pub No. HS99-141E (4-07)

A 5-Minute Safety Training Aid

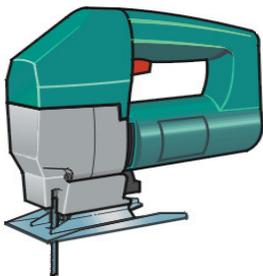
Tools are such a common part of our lives that sometimes we forget they can pose hazards to us.

All tools are manufactured with safety in mind, but accidents can occur if we fail to take the time to find and eliminate any hazards associated with the tools. We must learn to recognize the hazards and how to correct them before any accidents occur.

## Hazards of Hand Tools

The greatest hazards posed by hand tools result from misuse and improper maintenance. Some examples of this include the following.

- Using a screwdriver as a chisel may cause the blade tip to break off and injure a coworker or yourself. Using a knife blade as a screwdriver can have the same bad result.
- If a wooden handle is cracked, loose, or splintered, the head may separate from the handle and injure anyone nearby. Don't tape the handle and think it's fixed. Replace the handle completely or discard the tool.
- A sprung jaw on a wrench can cause slippage and should never be used.
- Using impact tools with mushroomed heads can release flying fragments that cause eye damage or sight loss.



- Never operate hand tools while fatigued or under the influence of medication or alcohol.

## General Rules for Portable Power Tools

Handheld power tools can be hazardous when improperly used. Operators need to be properly trained in the use and care of tools before operating them. Recommended training includes understanding the potential hazards associated with power tools and observing the following precautions during use:

- Never carry a power tool by the cord or hose and never yank the cord or hose to disconnect the tool from a power source. This can damage the cord or hose and cause the tool to malfunction. Make sure the grounding prongs are present on tool power cords and extension cords before plugging them in.
- Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges.
- Disconnect tools when not in use, before servicing, and when changing accessories such as blades, bits, and cutters.
- Keep observers at a safe distance from the work area. Only the operators should be in the area in which power tools are being used.
- Secure the work with clamps or a vise to keep your hands free. If the material being worked on breaks loose, it could cause a serious injury to the operator.
- To avoid accidental starting, keep your finger off the switch button when carrying a tool that's plugged in.
- Maintain all tools in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations. Keep the tool's instruction manual, which covers maintenance and safety precaution recommendations.
- Wear manufacturer-recommended protective equipment (e.g. goggles, safety glasses, or hard hats) when using the tool.
- Maintain good footing and proper balance when operating tools and wear appropriate clothing (no loose clothing, ties, jewelry, etc.) to avoid becoming entangled in moving parts.

- Remove damaged power tools from service and don't use them again until they've been properly repaired.
- Do not remove guards from a power tool. The manufacturer should provide the necessary guards, which will protect the operator and nearby coworkers from the following:
  - a. Point of operation
  - b. Rotating parts
  - c. Chips and sparks

Never remove a safety guard when a tool is in use.

Remember to practice safety. Don't learn it by accident.

The Texas Department of Insurance,  
Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI/DWC)  
E-mail [resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us)  
or call 1-800-687-7080 for more information.

*Safety Violations Hotline*  
**1-800-452-9595**  
**[safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us)**