

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

April 2023

POWER TOOL SAFETY

Power tools get jobs done with efficiency and reduced effort. But with power comes responsibility. Power tools can cause injury and even death if they are not used properly. Appropriate training, safe work practices, and power tool maintenance are key to preventing accidents. Only trained workers should use power tools on the job. Training should include reviewing the instruction manual, how to inspect the tools before each use, and following the manufacturer's maintenance schedule.



To maintain and inspect power tools: Use properly sized fittings and parts for the power tools.

- Keep tool cutting edges sharp and clean.
- Remove the adjustment keys and tools before operating the power tool.
- Check that power cords are intact (no nicks, frays, or kinks) to prevent shock and fire hazards.
- Always use safety guards and control switches to prevent accidental contact and activation. Failure to use all safety guards and devices can result in serious injury and substantial financial liability for employers.
- Remove damaged tools from use until they can be repaired or replaced.

Safe electrical work practices prevent electric shock and other injuries. Follow these electrical safety rules:

- Avoid using power cords in wet areas.
- Use proper grounding or double insulation for power tools.
- Keep tools turned off and unplugged when not in use.
- Don't carry or hoist power tools by their cords.
- Unplug tools at the outlet, not by pulling the cord from the wall.
- Coil power cords out of walkways to prevent trips and falls.

Power tools may send bits of material falling or flying at a very fast rate. PPE when using power tools includes:

- Safety glasses and/or face shields protect the eyes and face from flying debris.
- Goggles keep splashing liquids out of the eyes.
- Hearing protection minimizes exposure to noisy tools.
- A respirator protects against inhaling fumes and particulates.
- Snug fitting gloves.
- Anti-vibration gloves to prevent tissue damage from vibrating tools.
- Safety shoes to protect feet from falling materials and tools.

Good work habits include housekeeping and safe work practices. Use the correct tool for the job.

- Keep the work area clean, organized, and well lit.
- Stay alert when you use power tools.
- Be aware of where you place your hands at all times and keep them away from moving parts.
- Tie back hair, wear snug clothing and remove jewelry that could get caught in tools.
- Clamp, secure, and support work materials to a solid surface.
- Don't hold materials by hand or against your body while working on them.
- Let tools power up completely before contacting stock material.
- Don't touch tool parts until they come to a complete stop and are completely cool.
- Don't force the tool against the material or to do the work.

With good training, proper maintenance, and safe work habits power tools boost work efficiency while maintaining worker safety.



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