Hand Protection is a Good Deal



Download Instructor-Led Material

Meeting Kit	PowerPoint

There are a number of hazards your hands encounter every day on the job. Here are a few examples:

- Blades which can cut and amputate fingers or hands.
- Rough surfaces which can scrape the skin.
- Machinery which can pinch or crush fingers.
- Chemicals which can irritate or burn the skin.
- Chemicals which can be absorbed into the body and cause poisoning.
- Heat and cold.
- Electric current which can give you a fatal shock.
- Bio-hazardous materials which can cause disease.
- Repetitive strain and impact which can cause injuries over a long period of time.

There are various ways to protect your hands, and gloves are probably the most common. Because we also wear many different kinds of gloves off the job, it’s easy to take this kind of Personal Protective Equipment for granted.

It is imperative to wear the correct hand protection depending on the hazard; that is, cuts, burns, electric shock, chemicals and others. There are different kinds of gloves designed for special hazards, and your safety supervisor can advise you on which gloves to wear for your particular circumstance.

Examples are:

- Metal mesh gloves to prevent cutting injuries.
- Special rubber gloves for insulation against electricity.
- Leather gloves to protect against splinters and abrasion.
- Synthetic or rubber gloves for protection against certain chemicals.
- Gloves made of materials such as aluminized fabric for protection against extreme temperatures.

- Besides gloves, there are finger guards, cuffs, mitts and other kinds of hand protection.

Here are some of the other ways to protect your hands:

Work with respect around machinery, hand tools and other hazards to avoid hand injuries. You should not wear gloves when working closely with moving machinery because of the danger of becoming entangled. Machine guards should always be kept in place – they are there for your protection.

Avoid repetitive strain on the tendons and nerves. Some ways to do this are by changing your grip and your wrist position, by using a tool which is designed to prevent injury, or by using a wrist support. You should also rotate tasks to give your hands and wrists a rest.

Leave your jewelry at home. Rings or watches catch in machinery and cause debilitating crushing injuries, amputations and electrocution.

Don’t assume your hands are safe just because you have an office job. In the office, your hands are subject to many dangers ranging from slamming your fingers in a file cabinet drawer to amputations from paper cutters. The best defenses you have is the awareness of these and other dangers.

The issue of hand protection is complex and will probably differ with each work circumstance. If you have any questions about how to protect your hands in your own work area, please ask.