Sharp and Cutting Tool Safety Meeting Kit



What□s At Stake

SHARP FORCE INJURIES

Injuries produced by pointed objects or objects with sharp edges are referred to as “sharp force injuries.” Sharp force injuries are characterized by a relatively well-defined traumatic separation of tissues, occurring when a sharp-edged or pointed object comes into contact with the skin and underlying tissues. Three specific subtypes of sharp force injuries exist, as follows: stab wounds, incised wounds, and chop wounds.

What□s the Danger

COMMON CAUSES OF SHARP/CUTTING TOOLS

Improper handling of sharp/cutting tools is one of the leading causes of injuries from these tools. Taking shortcuts and being in a rush are often the cause of injuries when these tools are used by workers.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

SAFETY MEASURES TO PREVENT INJURIES FROM SHARP AND CUTTING TOOLS

Sharp or pointed objects can be hazardous and often cause painful injures. Injuries include cuts, punctures, nicks, and gashes. These injuries can be prevented through **employee training, protective gloves, machine guards, and proper equipment maintenance.**

All workers who use sharp and cutting tools must:

- Know the risks.
- Follow safe handling and disposal procedures.
- Report near misses, report all injuries and get proper treatment.

BEST WAY TO CONTROL THE RISK

The most reliable option is to eliminate the use of the blade. Assess if there is another way to cut the item, open the package, automate the process, or use a different tool.

WHAT WORKERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SAFE USE OF HAND TOOLS WITH SHARP BLADES

- Use the right tool for the job.
- Only use the tool only for the job it was designed for.
- Educate and train all staff in the safe use of any tool they may use.
- Inspect the tool before use.
- Make sure the blade is sharp. Dull blades require more force, increasing the chance of injury.
- Carry one tool at a time, tip and blade pointed down at your side.
- Work in a well-lit space so you can see what you are doing.
- Cut on a stable surface. Use a cutting board and/or slip-resistant matting to prevent the item from sliding.
- Where possible, use a mechanical device to hold the item.
- Hold the tool with your stronger hand.
- Use protective clothing such as cut resistant or mesh gloves.
- Cut away from your body. Make sure no body parts are in the cutting path, or in the path.
- If the tool has a retractable blade, retract it immediately after use, and retract it fully.
- Place the tool at the back of the counter when not in use, with the sharp edge away from you.
- Store tools appropriately. For example, store knives securely in a knife rack or drawer.
- When cutting food, clean the knife immediately after use or place it in a container labelled knives only.
- Throw out broken, dull, or rusty blades by placing them in a puncture resistant container.
- Do not use excessive pressure when cutting.
- Do not try to catch a falling tool. Quickly move out of the way, let it fall, and then pick it up.
- Do not engage in horseplay with a tool in your hand.
- Do not engage in discussions with your co-workers while you are using a sharp tool.
- Do not carry tools while carrying other objects.
- Do not carry an open tool in your pocket.
- Do not drop or leave a sharp tool in a place where it cannot be seen.
- Do not pass or throw a tool to someone else. Place the tool or knife on the counter for other persons.

WHAT WORKERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SAFE USE OF POWER TOOLS WITH SHARP BLADES

- Follow the manufacturer’s instruction manual when you operate, clean, and maintain the equipment.
- Make sure that proper lock out/tag out procedures are in place and followed.
- Make sure that all guards and safety devices are in place and functioning properly.
- Make sure cutting blades are sharp.
- Keep your hands away from the edges of cutting blades make sure you can see both your hands (and all your fingers) as well as the cutting blades.

- Keep your hands away from all moving parts and avoid cleaning or brushing off moving parts.
- Keep your hands out of feed hoppers and delivery chutes use a pusher or stick to load the machine.
- Turn off and unplug the equipment before trying to dislodge items, and before disassembling and cleaning.
- Put all guards and safety devices back in place after cleaning.
- Keep the floor and work area around the equipment clear of debris or items you might trip over.
- Do not try to reach into any part of the equipment with your fingers.
- Do not bypass any guards or safety devices.
- Do not operate the equipment if you feel tired or unwell.

FINAL WORD

Injuries that range from needle pricks in a medical setting to a laceration of a hand in a butcher chop are examples of the dangers of the use of sharp tools in the workplace.