

# Hand Tool Safety



## **Purpose:**

Often times we overlook the hazards associated with the common tools that are used on a daily basis. With this handout we hope to bring some awareness to the potential hazards of these tools and how to minimize these hazards. This handout is designed to educate employees on the safe operation of hand tools in order to reduce and prevent workplace injuries.

## **Overview:**

Improper use of hand tools can cause serious injuries in the workplace. In fact, an estimated 8 percent of all workplace compensable injuries are caused by incidents associated with hand tools. At Radford University hand tools are used every day by employees all over campus. Safe and proper use of hand tools is a necessity. In order to prevent accidents and injuries from happening, employees must fully understand how to work with hand tools. The following is a list of general safety procedures associated with the proper use of hand tools.

## **Safety Procedures:**

1. Always use the correct tool for the job. Don't use your wrench as a hammer. Don't use a screwdriver as a chisel, etc. Go back to the tool box and get the right tool in the right size for the job.
2. Inspect tools prior to use for damage. Don't use broken or damaged tools, dull cutting tools, or screwdrivers with worn tips. Impact tools, such as drift pins, wedges, form stakes, and chisels shall be kept free of mushroomed heads. The wooden handles of tools shall be kept free of splinters or cracks and shall be kept tight inside the tool.
3. Cut in a direction away from your body.
4. Never carry sharp tools in your pockets. Carry tools securely in a tool belt or box.
5. Never carry tools up ladders, use a hoist or rope.
6. Keep close track of tools when working at heights. A falling tool can kill a co-worker. Pass a tool to another person by the handle; never toss it to them.
7. Always use the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the job.
8. Make sure to replace dull blades. A dull blade or blunt point can lead to injury.
9. Make sure your work area is clean and dry.
10. Do not force tools beyond their capacity.
11. Do not use tool unless you have been properly instructed on its correct and safe use.

By implementing all of the safety procedures, employees can help prevent injuries and maintain a safe workplace for all students, faculty, and staff. For more information or questions regarding tool safety contact Radford University's Environmental Health and Safety Specialist at 540-831-6291.

I have read and reviewed the above safety information. I have discussed all questions, comments and concerns with my Supervisor or the EHS Office.

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward the signed form to: [ehs@radford.edu](mailto:ehs@radford.edu)