



050: Injury Prevention – Hands

Why this is important

The type of work you do requires dexterity and coordination with your hands.

Your hand needs strength to climb, hold tools, and carry materials.

Hand injuries are often debilitating, disfiguring, and painful.

The hand is made up of connective tissue and many small bones. It is a true marvel of nature, but easily damaged.

Impact injuries

To prevent smashing your fingers when using a hammer, use needlenose pliers to hold the nail or other object you are hammering.

Never put your hand in front of the business end of a power tool, pneumatic tool, or powder-actuated tool unless it is disconnected from its energy source.

Don't use the heel of your hand for striking a chisel, screwdriver, or other tool. You are likely to bruise your hand and strike something—perhaps your other hand—with the tool.

Crushing injuries

To prevent crushing your hand when moving a cabinet or other heavy object (such as a control cabinet) into position, place a 2x4 between the object and the wall.

When setting a heavy object into place, do not put your fingers under it for lifting purposes. If you find this unavoidable, put a 2x4 or several 2x4s on the surface where the object will sit. For example, if you are lifting a motor onto a pedestal, use boards to allow your fingers somewhere to go.

Electric arc

Wear appropriate rubber gloves and outer gloves appropriate to the voltage you are working on.

Do not grab a ground rod with your bare hands—it may be carrying fault current. If you grab it, you become a parallel circuit and the electricity will follow Kirchoff's Law.

Observe clearances based on voltage level.

Use insulated tools when working in or near live circuits. One little slip is all it takes.

Punctures and slices

Wear work gloves when working with sheet metal.

Wear work gloves when using punches, knockouts, and drills.

Clean metal shavings with a brush, rag, or vacuum, not with your hand.

Deburr any holes you make. Deburr any raceway you cut, even if it's plastic.

Follow this simple rule: "Don't put your hands where they shouldn't be."

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Think about all the things you do with your hands, and the dangers to your hands. You may want to share your thoughts during the discussion.

What this Safety Talk covers:

Taking care of your hands.

Discussion notes :

