



## 084: Tools–Hand Tool Safety

### *Why this is important*

A misapplied hand tool can easily result in injury.

A worn or damaged tool can easily result in injury. Tool-related injuries are 100% preventable. Check tools before you use them.

Poor tool use and maintenance habits are common.

If the tool slips off the part you're doing electrical work on, it may result in more than skinned knuckles—you could come in contact with energized parts.

### *Pick the right tool for the job*

Do not use a screwdriver, wrench, or other tool as a hammer. Use a hammer, instead. If you use a ratchet as a hammer, you'll damage the mechanism and it will slip later.

Use insulated tools around energized equipment. Electrical tape wrapped on the shank of a screwdriver is not suitable insulation.

Avoid using adjustable wrenches. Use the correct size box end or open end wrench.

Do not use pliers to turn nuts or bolts.

When using a slotted screwdriver, use the correct size blade for a given slot.

Use Phillips head tools for Phillips head fasteners, Torx™ head tools for Torx™ head fasteners, and so on.

Do not use a screwdriver as a prybar.

A screwdriver with a fatter handle reduces wrist strain.

Use hardened, industrial-quality tools.

### *Replace worn tools*

Replace any tool if the plating is chipped or peeling.

Replace a screwdriver if the tip is chipped, bent, or rounded off.

Replace a box end wrench if the box edges aren't sharp or true.

Replace an open end wrench if the jaws are no longer square.

Replace an adjustable wrench if the jaws have noticeable play, the mechanism slips or binds, or the jaws are rounded.

Replace a socket wrench if the wrench binds, if the locking mechanism no longer holds, or the wrench won't easily switch from forward to reverse.

Replace individual sockets if they are cracked, they don't stay on the wrench or extension, or if the faces or corners are no longer true.

Replace adjustable pliers if the jaws slip or bind. Replace them if the jaw grooves are worn too much for an effective grip.

Replace or sharpen any cutting tool that has lost its edge. Replace wire strippers and cutters that are dull.

### *Discussion leader duties for this session:*

Round up some worn tools for demonstration purposes.

### *What this Safety Talk covers:*

Preventing injury from misuse of hand tools.

### *Discussion notes :*

