THE INNOVATIVE EDGE

CCS

COMPOSITE CONSTRUCTION SYSTEMS

Power Tools

Power tools are such a common part of our workday that we sometimes forget that they can pose severe hazards. And this is especially true of power tools that are not used or maintained properly. Keeping tools in good condition and using them correctly will produce better results, will help you work faster, and will keep you safer.

Follow these safe work practices every time you use a power tool:

- Start by choosing the right tool for the job.
- Inspect each tool for damage before you use it
- Operate tools according to the manufacturer's instructions and don't exceed their limits.
- Remove damaged power tools from use and tag them "Do Not Use." Don't use damaged tools.
- Never remove or disable a guard.
- Plug power tools into a GFCl-protected circuit.
- Do not operate power tools n damp or wet areas unless they are approved for that kind of use.
- Wear all the necessary personal protective equipment when operating power tools. At a minimum, wear hearing and eye protection.
- Never carry a tool by the cord or hose.
- Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry. Tie back long hair and beards when you use power tools.
- Never yank the cord to disconnect a tool from an outlet or extension cord.
- Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges.
- Keep power cords and air hoses up and out of the way so they don't become tripping hazards.
- Disconnect tools: when you're not using them, before servicing or cleaning them, and before you change blades, bits, cutters, etc.
- Keep bystanders a safe distance away from the work area so they don't get struck by chips cr other debris generated by the power tool.
- Secure your work with a vise or clamps so that both of your hands are free to operate the tool.
- Avoid accidental operation! Do not carry any power tool with your finger on the trigger or switch, even if the tool is disconnected.
- Keep a solid footing and maintain good balance when operating power tools.
- Keep power tools clean and dry.
- Use sharp bits, blades, and cutters.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for oiling the tool and for changing accessories.
- Store all power tools safely and securely. It's best to store them in their original cases.

Make sue there is adequate lighting in your work area when you operate electric tools or hand tools.

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Will You Be Able to Hear Tomorrow?

Noise is all around us. Jackhammers, chain saws, air compressors, heavy equipment, and power tools all expose us to noise above 00 to ffi decibels. You have to protect your hearing. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, hearing loss 5 one of the most common work-related problems il the US. Every day, millions of workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels; and every day. the smart ones protect their heari□1 If \OU need to shout to re heard by someone who's standing an arm's-length away, you probably need hearing protection. Keep the following ideas il mind when you decide how to safeguard your hearing.

Earplugs or earmuffs. The type of hearing protection you choose has to provide sufficient protection against the noise. Fortunately, there are a variety of options available: expandable foam plugs, pre-molded reusable plugs, and earmuffs. Look for a rating called NRR (Noise Reduction Rating) on the package. Higher NRR values mean greater capacity for noise reduction and increased protection.

Comfort Your hearing protection has to re reasonably comfortable Cl' you're not very likely to wear it. Of course, if you aren't wearing it, it won't do you much good. Those same options frt differently and feel different il or on your ears. If you hate wearing earplugs, or if you have an ear infection, earmuffs are a good option. Earmuffs are also good when noise exposure is sporadic, since it may re inconvenient to remove and reinsert earplugs. The rest hearing protection fits properly, feels comfortable, and stays il place.

Hearing prorection has to be **accessible.** Workers need to have convenient and easy access to hearing protection a, the job. Your employer should make hearing protection readily available and make sure that it's appropriate for the noise levels in your work area.

The right hearing protection reduces noise to **a safe level and still allows you** to be **able** to **hear enough** to **communicate.** o, ajobsite, it's essential that you are able to communicate with co-workers. You need to hear oncoming traffic and nearby back-up alarms. If you can't hear someone say"Hey, watch out!"you could re il trouble.

Earbuds are not earplugs. Listening to music with earbuds 5 not protecting your hearing. h fact, if \ou turn up the volume so you can hear the music over the noise, you're making the problem worse by increasing the sound level il your ear-you're doing.more damage to your hearing. Wear proper hearing protection that reduces the noise level.

Hearing loss doesn't heal or grow back. Once you've lost all or part of your ability to hear, it's gone forever. If you want to re able to hear when 'your older-the TV, birds singing, your granddaughter's first words-youhave to protect your hearing

SAFETY REMINDER

Protect your hearing at **home, too. Wear hearing protection when you** mow **the** lawn, **attend loud concerts, or operate power tools.**

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COMPOSITE CONSTRUCTION SYSTEMS

Operating Heavy Equipment

Almost every construction site involves some kind of heavy equipment-an excavator, a crane, a tractor, a Bobcat, a backhoe, a truck, etc. When you operate heavy equipment, you ha\€ a tremendous responsibility for safety-yours, and everyone else's on the site,

Before you can operate any machinery, you have to know what you're doing. You need real training, not a few on-the-job instructions. Each time you are assigned to a new machine, you need to l:e trained on that machine.

As an operator, you have to watch out for above-ground hazards like power lines, trees, buildir:igs, and excavations, and underground hazards like culverts, buried utilities, basements, and vaults. AS the same time, you must l:e aware of your surroundings and the locations of everyone working near or around your machine.

AS the start of your shift, inspect the equipment. D> a complete 360-degree walk around. Go through the entire pre-start checklist tty the numbers. When you get into the operator's seat, buckle up. Before starting the engine, put all controls i1 their neutral positions and make sure co-workers are clear. Turn on the ignition, and then go through the post-start checklist. Don't omit any checks; don't assume something is OK just because it was last night when you parked the machine. Bal sure to check the steering, brakes, hydraulics, lights, horn, mirrors, and the back-up alarm. If anything is wrong. shut down the machine and get it repaired. .

Stay safe when you operate heavy equipment:

- Kick the mud off your boots, and keep three points of contact when climbing the ladder.
- Avoid distractions, especially cell phones. Stay aware of your surroundings at all times.
- 1Make sure there 5 an exclusion zone i1 place to keep bystanders out of danger.
- Make sure all underground utilities and installations are marked.
- Know the limitations of the machinery. Stay within the manufacturer's capacity ratings.
- Watch out for co-workers and spotters. You don't want to hit them or put them in a struck-tty or caught-in-between situation.
- Always pay attention to where you're going and/or where the boom or load is going.
- D> not back into work areas without someone clearing the area and providing hand signals.
- Never leave heavy equipment unattended with the engine running, especially ifthe machine is on loose material or on an inclined surface.
- Never allow anyone to ride a, the equipment unless they are in seats that have seat belts.

Shut off the engine and let it cool down before you refuel. Don't ever smoke while you are refueling.

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Pneumatic Tools

Pneumatic tools are powered by compressed air, usually from an air compressor. Common examples include nail guns, staple guns, drills, hammers, chippers, grinders, and sanders. There are many dangers associated with pneumatic tools: getting hit by a disconnected air hose, getting hit by an attachment or a fastener, tripping over an air hose, hazardous noise levels from tools and compressors, and hazards created by dust and flying chips.

Pneumatic tools require special precautions:

- Connect safety devices when you are hooking up air hoses. You need to prevent air hoses from whipping around and causing injury or damage if they accidentally come uncoupled. Use a short wire or positive locking device to attach the hose to the tool and to serve as a safeguard.
- Identify all pneumatic tools that shoot nails, rivets, staples, or similar fasteners, and operate at pressures of more than 100 pounds per square inch. These tools must have special safety devices that prevent fasteners from being ejected the muzzle is pressed against the work surface.
- Be sure that a safety clip or retainer clip is installed to prevent attachments (like the chisel on a chipping hammer) from being accidentally ejected while the tool is being used.

Follow these safe work practices:

- Never point a pneumatic tool at anyone.
- Never carry a tool with your finger on the trigger.
- Keep hoses from creating tripping hazards.
- Make sure you know what is on the other side of a wall before pulling the trigger of a nail gun. You don't want the nail to go all the way through and hit a person or a gas line.
- Protect your hearing from the noise produced by pneumatic tools. Wear the appropriate hearing protection.
- Wear eye and face protection to protect yourself from chips, fasteners, and other flying objects.
- Set up screens around chippers, rivet guns, staplers, and air drills to protect nearby workers from being hit by flying fragments.
- Never use a tool unless you have been trained to use that specific tool. If you have questions, ask your supervisor before you start work.
- Never leave a nail gun unattended.

When you are using any kind of tool, from a screwdriver to a cement mixer, to a pneumatic nail gun, it's important that you: 1) always select the proper tool for the job, 2) be sure the tool is in good working condition, 3) use the tool according to the manufacturer's instructions, and 4) maintain and store the tool properly when you're done.

Never Use Compressed air to clean your skin or clothes

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