



A safety talk for successful injury prevention

Hand safety — construction

Introduction:

We use our hands more than any other body part in construction work. That's why hand injuries are so common—more than a half million per year! Hand injuries are preventable when we recognize hand hazards.

Plan activities to eliminate hand hazards by discussing the placement, removal and protection of hands.

Hazards:

- Missing guards on equipment.
- Pinch points.
- Use of a tool instead of the hand (such as a shovel).
- Proper PPE use. Are you using the right gloves for the job?

Safe procedures:

- Make sure hand placement is safe. Can the tool hit body parts from use? Think through entire usage. What can go wrong?
- Be proactive. Think about the hazards before doing the job. In case tool bounces or fails, where is your hand? Nail gun use.

- Recognize that hand protection is based on the hazard. Concrete presents different needs than sharp edges.
- Use the right kind of gloves. Check the SDS for information on types of gloves to be worn. PPE must not present a greater hazard such as around moving parts, belts, shafts.
- Report all breaks in the skin for first-aid and follow-up. Minor issues can become major if not handled promptly.

In conclusion:

Let's ask ourselves:

- What hand hazards do we have on our site?
- What close calls with hand injuries have we had?
- Do we have the type of gloves we need onsite and ready for use?
- What can we do to improve hand hazards on this job?

What wins, metal or flesh? Think before you act!