TOOLBOX TALK

Tool Safety

Pre-Use Inspection, Safe Operation & Maintenance

Meeting Information

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location/Job Site: _____

Presenter: _____ Company: _____

Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance of pre-use tool inspections
- Identify common tool hazards and how to avoid them
- Know proper PPE requirements for various tool operations
- Learn safe operating procedures for hand and power tools
- Recognize when tools should be removed from service

Estimated Duration:
10-15 Minutes

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Discussion Topics

■ OPENING QUESTION

"Has anyone ever had a close call or injury involving a tool? What happened?"

WHY TOOL SAFETY MATTERS

- Over 400,000 emergency room visits annually are caused by hand and power tool injuries
- The most common injuries include lacerations, amputations, eye injuries, and punctures
- Most tool injuries are PREVENTABLE with proper training, inspection, and safe practices
- Defective or improperly used tools are a leading cause of workplace injuries

PRE-USE INSPECTION – CHECK BEFORE EVERY USE

Hand Tools:

- Handles are secure, not cracked, splintered, or loose
- Metal parts are free from cracks, chips, or mushroomed heads
- Cutting edges are sharp (dull tools require more force = more risk)
- Tools are clean and free from oil/grease that could cause slipping

Power Tools:

- Cords are free from cuts, fraying, or damaged insulation
- Plugs have all prongs intact (including ground prong)
- Guards are in place and functioning properly
- Switches and triggers operate correctly
- Batteries (cordless) are not swollen, cracked, or leaking

■ CRITICAL RULE

If a tool fails inspection, tag it "OUT OF SERVICE" and remove it from the work area.
NEVER use a damaged or defective tool!

REQUIRED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- **Safety Glasses/Goggles:** Required for ALL tool operations – flying debris can cause permanent eye damage
- **Work Gloves:** Appropriate for task – but NEVER wear gloves with rotating tools
- **Hearing Protection:** Required when noise exceeds 85 dB (most power tools)
- **Face Shield:** Required for grinding, chipping, or high-debris operations
- **Dust Mask/Respirator:** Required when generating dust or working with treated materials

Safe Operating Practices

GENERAL TOOL SAFETY RULES

- Use the RIGHT tool for the job – never improvise or use tools beyond their design
- Keep your work area clean and well-lit – clutter leads to accidents
- Maintain a firm grip and stable footing at all times
- Never carry tools by the cord or hose
- Disconnect power before changing blades, bits, or making adjustments
- Keep cutting tools sharp – dull tools require excessive force
- Never leave tools running unattended
- Store tools properly when not in use

POWER TOOL SAFETY

- **Always use GFCI protection for corded tools in wet or damp locations**
- **Never bypass or disable guards – they are there for your protection**
- **Allow tools to reach full speed before beginning the cut**
- **Don't force the tool – let it do the work at its own pace**
- **Be aware of kickback potential and position yourself accordingly**
- **Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges**
- **Secure your workpiece with clamps or a vise – never hold material freehand**

HAND TOOL SAFETY

- **Cut away from your body, not toward it**
- **Use the proper size wrench – don't use extensions or "cheater bars"**
- **Don't use screwdrivers as chisels or pry bars**
- **Strike with a flat surface – don't use the side of a hammer**
- **Keep knife blades retracted when not in use**
- **Never carry sharp tools in your pocket without a sheath**

■ KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Inspect EVERY tool BEFORE each use
2. Use the RIGHT tool for the job
3. Wear appropriate PPE – especially eye protection
4. Never disable or bypass safety guards
5. If in doubt, ask your supervisor

Attendance Sign-Off Sheet

By signing below, I acknowledge that I attended this toolbox talk and understand the safety information presented.

Topic: Tool Safety – Pre-Use Inspection, Safe Operation & Maintenance

Date: _____ **Presenter:** _____ **Job Site:** _____

#	Print Name	Signature	Company
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Presenter Signature: _____ **Date:** _____