

Dear valued partner,

At Rockwood Casualty we have noticed an increase in claims because of hand and power tools. In this newsletter, we will address safety precautions and concerns with the use of hand and power tools.

Which of the following is an example of improper use of hand / power tools?

- a) Making sure your grinder has a wheel rated for the appropriate RPM's
- b) Ensuring all guards are installed and set to the appropriate height / distance
- c) Repairing or replacing damaged tools
- d) Using a screwdriver as a chisel

*Answer at the end of the email.*



(Missed a previous email? [Click here](#) to see an archive of previous month's safety emails on Rockwood's Loss Control website.)



## WHAT ARE THE KEY STATISTICS of **HAND AND POWER TOOL SAFETY?**



Did you know that an estimated 8 % of all workplace compensable injuries are caused by incidents involving power tools? These injuries can be serious including loss of fingers or eyesight.



According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 64,100 injuries involving electric saws were reported in 2001. Power tools—engine saws, electric saws, and hand grinders—are hand-held or table-mounted saws that use a toothed metal disc or blade to cut wood or other materials.



The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reported that upward of 10,000 work-related finger amputations are performed annually among persons ≥15 years of age in U.S. hospital emergency departments.



## **SAFETY TIPS FOR HAND AND POWER TOOL SAFETY**

### **Choose the Right Tools and Take Care of Them**

OSHA protects employees by requiring companies to ensure their employees use safe tools and equipment and follow safety guidelines. No matter how many years an employee has under his belt, reviewing the following tips for hand and power tool safety regularly is critical to staying safe.

1. Buy quality tools. Hammers with wooden handles are not as safe as those made of steel hand tools. Make sure steel tools are heat-treated.
2. Regularly inspect tools to ensure they are in good condition and work properly.
3. If you find something wrong with a tool, don't use it, and report the problem to your manager.
4. Perform regular maintenance on your tools, like grinding or sharpening saw blades.
5. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
6. Keep extra tools handy in case the tool you had planned to use is damaged.
7. Make sure to store your tools in a safe place, keeping sharp edges from children and others who may get hurt trying to use the tools.
8. When working up high, do not leave tools where they could fall on workers below.

### **Tips for Hand and Power Tool Safety - Electric Tools**

Because of the potential dangers involved in using power tools OSHA provides specific safety guidelines for their use. OSHA requires many handheld power tools to be equipped with a constant-pressure switch button that cuts off the power when pressure drops including drills, tappers, angle grinders, saws, and sanders. Many power tools with blades must have safety devices that allow the user to shut the tool off in a single motion.

One of the most serious workplace injuries involving tools is electrical shock from power tools. Electrical shocks can cause heart failure and burns. Sometimes a worker is shocked while on a ladder, then loses their balance and is injured in a fall. Tips for preventing electrical shock are at the top of the list of ways to stay safe using power tools.

1. Use tools that are double-insulated or have a three-pointed power cord and are plugged into a power source with a rounded receptacle.
2. Do not use electric tools in wet conditions unless they are approved for that use.
3. Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) or an assured grounding program. Use the appropriate PPE like face protection or leather work gloves.
4. Keep your work area dry and clean to avoid slipping while working with or around dangerous electric power tools.
5. Be sure to find good footing, maintain balance, and secure your work with clamps or a vise to free both of your hands for safe use of power tools.
6. Never carry portable electric tools by their cords and do not yank them from the power source.
7. Prevent accidental starting by keeping your fingers away from the switch button while carrying a power tool.

### **Tips for Using Pneumatic Tools Safely**

Pneumatic nail gun accidents send 37,000 carpenters to the emergency room each year according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

Most people have wounds on their fingers or hands. Sometimes, they have more serious injuries, like eye injuries.

Wearing eye and face protection is an important safety measure for working with pneumatic nail guns and OSHA watches companies carefully to make sure workers are protected. In its FY2021 report on the most frequent safety violations, OSHA reports construction companies' failure to meet standards for face and eye protection were among the top ten violations in FY2021.

Safety experts urge construction companies to take steps to improve safety if necessary. These tips for hand and power tool safety related to pneumatic tools are a good place to improve your attention to safety.

1. Verify that all parts of the tool are fastened securely before each use.
2. Never point a compressed air gun at yourself or another person.
3. When you are finished using an air gun, make sure the pressure is released before you break the hose connections. Never store an air gun that is loaded.
4. Use a safety clip or retainer to prevent attachments from being ejected during operation, and use a chip guard when using high-pressure compressed air for cleaning. Be sure to limit the nozzle pressure to 30 pounds per square inch.
5. Always wear eye protection.
6. Ensure a secure work environment by using screens to protect nearby workers from flying fragments.
7. Never leave tools unattended.

## How to Prepare Yourself and Your Space for Staying Safe

Using tools safely includes more than knowing the tools. Employees must pay attention to what they wear, how they carry their tools, and where they stand. To protect employees from the dangers of slips and electrical shock, managers should ensure floors are kept as clean and dry as possible. Tips for hand and power tool safety include choosing the right clothing:

1. Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry that can get caught in a tool's moving parts.
2. Stay safe by wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), like leather gloves, safety goggles, or face shields.
3. Make sure your work area is level and you have good balance when using tools.
4. Be aware of the people around you and ensure they stay a safe distance from your workspace.
5. Never climb a ladder with a tool in your hand. Instead, find someone on the ground to hoist tools to you with a bucket or bag on a rope.
6. Don't carry pointed tools in your pocket. Carry them in a toolbox or cart instead.
7. Use the right tool for the job. For example, don't use a wrench to pound in a nail when you should be using a hammer.
8. When appropriate, secure your project with a clamp or vise to keep it from slipping.

Information from [-30 Tips for Hand and Power Tool Safety - HSI](#)



### **Rockwood Resources:**

- [Conveyors and Stationary Equipment: Hammers](#) – Toolbox Talk
- [Hand Tools - Pry Bars](#) – Toolbox Talk
- [Hand Tools](#) – Toolbox Talk
- [Power Tools](#) – Toolbox Talk
- [Vibrations](#) – Toolbox Talk
- [Come Along Poster](#) – Poster
- [Come Along & Chain Hoist Safety](#) – Toolbox Talk
- [Complacency](#) – Toolbox Talk
- You can find additional Rockwood Toolbox Talks [here](#).

### **OSHA, MSHA and other Resources:**

- [Hand Tool Safety](#) | OSHA Safety Manuals
- [Hand and Power Tools - Overview](#) | OSHA
- [Drills, grinders, welding, hand tools, come alongs](#) | MSHA - Safety Toolbox Talk
- [Mechanic & Shop Safety](#) | MSHA Best Practice Series
- [Hand Safety](#) | MSHA Toolbox Talk
- [Protect Your Hands – Mechanic Safety on the Mine Site](#) | Mine Safety Institute



## **Learn more about [HAND AND POWER TOOL SAFETY](#) on Streamery**

Every Rockwood policy includes access to Streamery, a vast safety library with videos, quizzes and more resources to help you promote safety in your workplace. If you don't have access, contact us to get a username. Enter the SKU number below to find the recommended video.

### **Watch [Streamery](#) videos on [HAND AND POWER TOOL SAFETY](#):**

- **Hand and Power Tool Safety:** 21 min / SKU: 3226 + 3226 - S / English & Spanish
- **Working Safely With Pneumatic Tools:** 8 min / SKU: 1425 + 1425 - S / English % Spanish
- **Hand and Power Tool Safety:** 15 min / SKU: 3590 + 3590 - S / English & Spanish
- **Many more on Streamery**



### **BONUS MATERIALS:**

## **[1. Holiday Safety](#)**

- [15 OSHA Holiday Season Safety Tips - SafetyPedia & NFPA](#) – check out these holiday safety tips for around the house!
- [9 Tips to Protect Workers During the Holidays - US Dept of Labor](#) - Check out this 1 min YouTube video for workplace holiday safety tips!
- [Holiday Season Safety Tips for Your Workers - Safety By Design](#) – Check out these workplace holiday safety tips!

## 2. SEAT BELT COVERS



Don't forget that Rockwood Casualty is providing **FREE** high visibility seatbelt covers to our insured to assist in enforcement of seatbelt use by employees. Please contact [safetysolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com](mailto:safetysolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com) to make a request for your company and specify orange or yellow.



**Questions? Feel free to reach out:** As always, your Rockwood partners are available to answer your questions and help you promote safety in the workplace. Contact Rockwood Loss Control for any support you need.

### **ANSWER: Which of the following is an example of improper use of hand / power tools?**

- Making sure your grinder has a wheel rated for the appropriate RPM's
- Ensuring all guards are installed and set to the appropriate height / distance
- Repairing or replacing damaged tools
- Using a screwdriver as a chisel**

*Using a screwdriver as a chisel is an example of using the wrong tool for the job. Employees should always use the appropriate tool for the job to avoid accident or injury.*



#RockwoodSafetySolutions #LossControl #SafetyTips

Thank you for your continued partnership,

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