



Weekly Safety Meetings

Safety Training for the Construction Industry

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COMPANY NAME: _____

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Easy Rules for Hand Tools

When it comes to working with hand tools, there are safe work practices (or DOs) and bad habits (or DON'Ts). If you want to protect yourself from injury, preserve your vision, and avoid finger amputations, you should incorporate the DOs into your work habits and stay away from the DON'Ts. Below is a list of hand tools, along with safe work practices you should always follow, and unsafe conditions that you should take care to avoid.

Screwdrivers—ALWAYS use the right size and type of screwdriver for the job.

- Don't use a screwdriver if the handle is broken or if the tip is dull, bent, or chipped.
- Never use a screwdriver as a chisel or pry bar.

Saws—ALWAYS wear eye protection when you use a saw.

- Don't use a saw if the handle is loose, cracked, or splintered.
- Never use your thigh as a sawhorse.

Wrenches—ALWAYS use the right size for the job.

- Don't use defective wrenches or those with broken jaws or bald teeth.
- Never use a wrench as a hammer.
- Never use a pipe on the handle as a cheater.

Knives—ALWAYS keep knives in good condition.

- Don't use knives with dull or broken blades, or broken or worn handles.

- Never cut toward your body.
- Never use your pocket as a sheath for a knife.
- Never use any knife as a prying tool.

Chisels and Punches—ALWAYS wear safety glasses when using impact tools.

- Don't use a chisel or punch if it is too short to allow for a safe grip, if the head is mushroomed, or if it's over-tempered.
- Don't use a hammer to pound on a hand-chisel.
- Never use impact tools if you cannot hold them firmly.

Hammers—ALWAYS make sure you have enough clearance from co-workers when using a hammer.

- Avoid awkward positions when using a hammer to avoid sprains and injuries.
- Never strike a hardened or brittle surface with a hardened hammer (like a nail hammer).
- Never use a hammer if another tool is more appropriate for the task.

Take the time to choose the right tool for the job every time. "Making do" will eventually "make injuries."

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Don't use tools that are damaged or broken. Tag them "Do Not Use" and take them out of service.

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General Housekeeping

You may resist the idea of good housekeeping on the jobsite, thinking that cleaning up isn't your job, that it's something that someone else should do. That poor attitude is the sloppy thinking that can lead to accidents around the jobsite—accidents in which people might die. Keeping the jobsite clean and hazard-free is a way of reducing waste, making your work easier, and saving lives. And doesn't that sound more important than just "cleaning up?"

Reducing Waste and Saving Money: Many construction sites today have gone "green." The most obvious and common green practice is recycling unused building materials that would normally end up in a landfill. Some of these materials include cardboard, sheetrock, concrete, scrap metal, PVC pipe, wood, lumber, and paint. Taking part in such a recycling plan might play a role in earning your project a LEED certification, which guarantees that a building was constructed using strategies that are environmentally responsible, profitable, safe, and healthy. You can participate by measuring twice and cutting once to save materials and by making sure you place unused materials and usable scrap in the proper recycling containers.

Making the Jobsite Safer: Time is money; but injuries waste time and money. Bending nails over, throwing out banding, and picking up short pieces of conduit does take time, but accidents and injuries cost far more. Consider the savings in time, money, and misery because you don't fall and break a leg, and because you don't get a painful puncture wound in your foot. Take the time throughout the day to clear away the

debris that accumulates on a busy construction site. Make sure combustible materials like cardboard boxes and wrappers don't pile up—clear them away throughout the day. Even on a small job, always keep exit routes clear. Emergencies occur unexpectedly. It's your responsibility to be prepared to respond quickly.

Saving Lives: People slip, fall, and suffer injuries all the time. How would you feel if a co-worker slipped on some plastic sheeting, fell, smashed his head on a stack of tile, and died? How would your family cope if you died? Clean up as you go. The life you save may be your own.

Make a personal commitment to help maintain a clean site and always pick up after yourself. After your break, put leftovers and scraps in trash cans. Limit the amount of materials that you bring to a work area. Having enough to get the job done, but not too much extra, will reduce the amount of clutter that you produce. Like it or not, as we age, our reactions slow down, making us more prone to both falling and sustaining serious injuries from such falls. If you have older workers on the jobsite, consider their safety as well as your own. Throughout your shift, and at the end of each day, be sure to tidy up.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Take pride in the work that you do. Keeping the jobsite clean and clutter-free, really allows your craftsmanship and good work to shine through.

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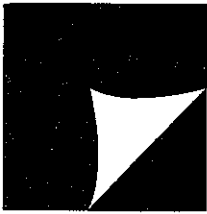
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Confined Spaces

A confined space is one that:

- has limited openings for entry or exit,
- is large enough to enter and work in,
- and is not designed for continuous worker occupancy.

Confined spaces can include: underground vaults, tanks, vessels, storage bins, manholes, pits, silos, and pipelines. You can probably think of many more examples. Does this jobsite have any places that could be considered confined spaces? Before you work in a confined space, you must have the proper training, learn about hazardous atmospheres, and know what information is needed if the confined space requires a permit.

Training: If your work requires that you enter a confined space, or if you are a standby worker, you should first become familiar with your workplace's confined space entry program and get the proper training. If you are the standby employee, make sure you have the proper rescue equipment before you enter the confined space. One of the most common ways people die in confined spaces is when they enter the space to assist a co-worker in trouble.

Hazardous atmospheres: A confined space may contain a hazardous atmosphere. It's extremely important to test the atmosphere before you enter the space. Atmospheres that contain methane gas, nitrogen, flammable or explosive gases or vapors, airborne combustible dust, or that don't have enough oxygen can be deadly. Your nose cannot detect many of those hazards—get the air in the space tested.

OSHA does not currently define or regulate Permit-Required Confined Spaces in construction work. (These spaces are regulated under General Industry standard 1910.146.) Even if a permit isn't actually required, understanding what goes on the permit can help you work safely. Consider these permit items:

- a description of the space to be entered, its location, the purpose of entry, and the authorized duration of the permit.
- specific hazards such as: oxygen deficiency, toxic or flammable gases or vapors, mechanical hazards, electric shock hazards, and engulfment hazards.
- a list of equipment required for entry and work such as: PPE (including respiratory protection), atmospheric testing and monitoring equipment, the specific type of communication equipment necessary, rescue equipment, and all other necessary special equipment.
- a list of authorized entrants and attendants.
- specific information about who to contact in case of an emergency including the name, phone number, and method of contact.
- records of atmospheric testing for oxygen, for combustible gases, and for toxic gases and vapors.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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When you work in a confined space, follow every safety rule to the letter. Don't deviate or take shortcuts.

Your life depends on it.

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Working Alone

Construction jobs involve work crews of all sizes; it depends on the job and what work needs to be done. Crews often consist of 6 to 12 men and women who accomplish all the tasks. The members of the crew help keep each other safe and on-track. But what if you're the only worker assigned to a job? With no co-workers around it might be easier to let safety take a back seat. On large jobs, safety is discussed and everyone is reminded to follow safe work practices in pre-shift safety meetings each day. Would you read a safety meeting by yourself, or fill out a job safety analysis when you're the only one doing the task? Working alone is when you need to work very cautiously and be at your safest because your well-being depends entirely on you.

Working alone presents many challenges. For instance, you don't have anyone watching your back, reminding you to put on your personal protective equipment (PPE), or giving you a heads up when you're about to make a dangerous mistake. But sometimes a job only requires one person, and that one person might be you. To make sure you complete that job without an incident, you should plan ahead and prepare for all of the hazards ahead of you.

Before you begin working alone, consider some of the following questions:

- What safety requirements does your employer expect you to follow before you start a job—pre-task plans, JSAs, permits, inspections?
- Do you know what PPE will be needed? Do you have it with you?

- Do you know where the work is going to take place—ground, scaffold, roof, basement?
- Have you taken the time to survey the area?
- Are there any visible hazards?
- Does the job require you to wear fall protection?
- Is the job going to involve hot work where sparks, welding slag, or open flames could cause a fire or explosion? Do you need a permit or fire watch?
- Will you have a fire extinguisher nearby?
- Do you need to work from a ladder?
- Do you have the right tools for the job?
- Is power and lighting available?
- Are circuits at the site protected by GFCIs?
- Where can you get drinking water and have access to restroom facilities?
- Is any of the work going to be done in a confined space?
- Do you have a way to communicate with your supervisor or call for help if there is a problem?
- What happens if you get injured? What will you do until help arrives?

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SAFETY REMINDER
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There are also some benefits to working alone. You have fewer distractions and you can take pride in knowing that you completed the work yourself.

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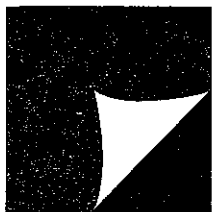
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Hanging Steel

Long before any steel is raised on a jobsite, qualified personnel create a steel-erection safety plan. Steel erection operations are dangerous; a good plan will go a long way to reduce the likelihood that workers will be injured or killed while they're doing their jobs. A good overall plan covers both administrative and practical issues, and will more than likely address many of the following aspects.

Approvals: Controlling contractors need to give written approval to steel erectors letting them know that the concrete and anchor bolts that will support the steel are ready to go. Steel cannot be erected without such approvals.

Erection Plan: Site-specific erection plans are developed by a qualified person who outlines the details of the job. The plan has to be available on the jobsite and may include such things as: the sequence of activities and material deliveries, necessary fall protection, and emergency evacuation plans.

Site Layout Plan: There must be adequate access roads throughout the site for the delivery and movement of heavy equipment and materials. The soil should be firm, properly graded, drained, and readily accessible for the work to be done. An improperly prepared site will—at best—create mud holes that could swallow the wheels of steel delivery trucks and—at worst—can destabilized a crane.

Hoisting and Rigging: Specialized hazards are present during hoisting and rigging of steel members and materials. Before each shift, a competent person must visually inspect

every aspect of the cranes. Loads should only be hooked up by qualified riggers. Never work under a suspended load. Exclusion zones must be clearly established and respected by everyone on the jobsite. When handling wire ropes, chokers, or load lines, watch for broken strands, wires, and fishhooks. Remove damaged rigging from service immediately.

Placing Decking: No loads are allowed on steel joists until all bridging is installed and anchored. Secure all decking against displacement.

Falling Object Protection: Take steps to secure materials, tools, and equipment against accidental displacement. Protect yourself by wearing your hardhat.

Fall Protection: Never walk the iron without being tied off. Personal fall-arrest systems include body harnesses, lanyards, and a safe anchoring point. Always inspect your harness and lanyard before you go up on the iron. Tie off at all times.

Walking and Working Surfaces: Roof and floor openings must be covered, secured, and labeled "HOLE" during the decking process. Make sure there is protection around columns to prevent falls and protect workers below.

Whether you're a union ironworker or a member of another trade, understand the risks steel erection brings to the jobsite.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Never use a body belt for fall arrest.

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