

News Bulletin

Compliment of Fort Sam Safety Office

Safety Topic # 1

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Tool Safety

OSHA Standards 29 CFR 1910.241 through OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.244, cover hand and portable powered tools and other hand-held equipment safety. OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.242, states "Employer shall be responsible for the safe condition of tools and equipment of tools and equipment used by employees, including tools and equipment which may be furnished by employees".

Tools are such a common part of our lives that sometimes we may forget they can pose a safety hazard. Hand and power tools potential hazards include: falling items, flying parts, abrasive or splashing objects, harmful dusts, fumes, mists, vapors, or gases, etc. There are many types of tools available to help us perform our duties: Electric tools, portable abrasive wheel tools, pneumatic tools, liquid fuel tools, powder-actuated tools, and hydraulic tools.

Five basic safety rules to eliminate tool-related hazards are:

- Keep all tools in good operating condition with regular maintenance.
- Use the right tool for the job.
- Examine each tool for damage before use and do not use damaged tools.
- Operate tools according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- Provide and use personal protective equipment properly.

A checklist is attached to assist personnel in observing general precautions for safe tool use. *Due to specific requirements, the Safety Office must be notified if anyone is using powder-actuated tools on Post.*

Real-Life Examples:

One employee was climbing a metal ladder to hand an electric drill to the journeyman installer on a scaffold about five feet above him. When the victim reached the third rung from the bottom of the ladder he received an electric shock that killed him. The investigation revealed that the extension cord had a missing grounding prong and that a conductor on the green grounding wire was making intermittent contact with the energizing black wire thereby energizing the entire length of the grounding wire and the drill's frame. The drill was not double insulated.



Two employees were doing remodeling construction and were building a wall. One of the workers was killed when he was struck by a nail fired from a powder-actuated tool. The tool operator, while attempting to anchor plywood to a 2" x 4" stud, fired the tool. The nail penetrated the stud and the plywood partition prior to striking the victim.