CONSTRUCTION LABOR SERVICES, INC

THE

CONNECTION

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TOOLBOX TALKS: MAKE THEM EFFECTIVE

Toolbox talks are specifically geared to construction workers who need to know about safety problems and issues, but don't have a lot of time to sacrifice.

Toolbox talks make workers aware the possibility of the hazards they'll face on the job. That's why it's so important to discuss current events and what has transpired at other locations. If workers learn about the accidents and near-misses on other jobs, they will be more likely to apply the information to their own site.

WHO NEEDS THEM? Everybody of course, can benefit form toolbox safety talks. But the two types of workers who probably get the most from them are veterans, with many years experience, and the new worker.

The worker who has been on the job a long time tends to become lax regarding safety. On the other hand, the new worker won't know the job and hasn't had much safety training.

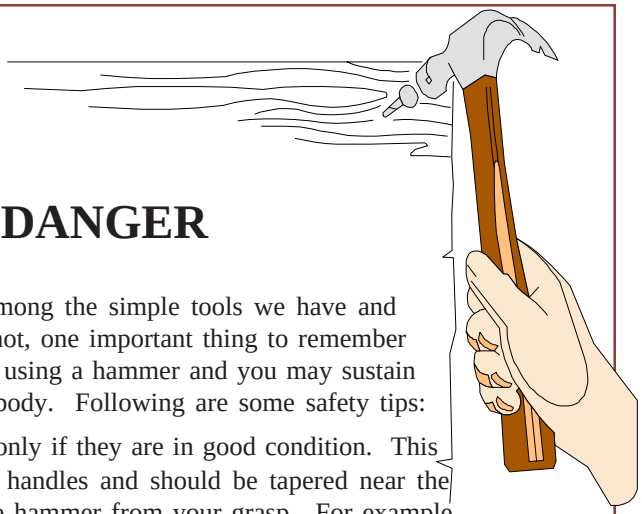
WHEN IS THE BEST TIME? Most people are more receptive in the morning. So the best time to have a toolbox talk is just before workers start in the morning or during morning coffee break. The thought of safety will then be fresh in the minds of you and your coworkers.

HOW LONG SHOULD THEY BE? Toolbox talks should not be long dissertations read straight from a book. The talks should run anywhere from 5 to 7 minutes.

Try to take an active part in the toolbox talk discussions by giving input or insight into various aspects on your particular sight.

SIMPLE TOOLS:

STILL A DANGER



The hammer and the sledge are among the simple tools we have and among the oldest. But simple or not, one important thing to remember is that it's easy to be injured while using a hammer and you may sustain injury to almost any part of your body. Following are some safety tips:

<> **Condition:** Use hammers only if they are in good condition. This means that they should have tight handles and should be tapered near the handgrip so that you won't lose the hammer from your grasp. For example, a broomstick shoved into a hammerhead is not a safe arrangement.

Handles that have broken off, that are shortened and jammed into the head, will not provide a full swing. They won't give the same impact and they require more strokes of the hammer. Hammers should also be free of grease and oil for obvious reasons.

<> **Protection:** When using a chisel or hammer, wear eye protection anytime you drive nails or make a hole in stone or concrete. Hammering causes bits and pieces of hard objects to be thrown around in the air, sometimes at great speeds, so it's wise to wear either your safety glasses or goggles.

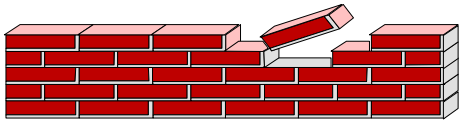
<> **Attention:** Keep your mind on your work, stare at the head of the nail or top of the chisel when you're using a hammer. Anyone who plays golf knows the adage about keeping your eye on the ball if you want to his it squarely. The same is true for hammers and sledges.

<> **Workspace:** Be certain you have ample room to swing a hammer. Is your workspace unobstructed? Can you take a full swing? What if you miss the object? You might want to use lighter blows and a shorter swing in limited space areas, which means you will probable use more blows to do the same work.

<> **Incorrect tool:** Don't use a wrench or a rock or a large bolt as a hammer. Also, don't use your shoe, your foot, or your hand as a hammer, except in an emergency. Homeowners are the most frequent offenders when it comes to using the incorrect tool, but on the worksite, there is no excuse for not using the proper hammer for the job involved.

<> **Tool-to-tool:** Almost all metal hammers are made of hardened steel so that they will withstand the constant pounding against of metals, such as nails, and other substances, such as wood or plastic. So, don't strike a hammer with another hammer because one of them may lose a small piece of metal from the impact, and the speed of the flying chip will be great. Use a soft metal hammer or rawhide mallet on hardened metals. Soft plastic and hard rubber mallets are also available.

TOOL TIME



How to stay safe on your feet

Take special care to protect your feet at work, an injured foot or foot-related problems can cause discomfort, pain and fatigue - and when you're tired, you're more prone to accidents. So take these "safety steps" toward healthy feet:

Know the hazards. Different workspaces have different hazards. Make sure you know what those hazards are - from cords that run across the office to objects that may fall from overhead.

Use shock-absorbing insoles. This is especially important if you do a lot of walking or standing on hard floors at work.

Wear proper shoes. When it comes to fee, choose comfort over fashion. Safe shoes:

1. Have an inner side that is straight from the heel to the end of the big toe.
2. Grip the heel firmly.
3. Allow you to move your toes.
4. Have a low, wide-based heel.

Buy the right shoes

1. Don't assume a tight shoe will stretch in time.
2. Measure both feet since they're normally different sizes. Get the shoes that fit the larger foot.
3. Try on and buy shoes late in the afternoon. This is the time you're feet will be their largest, if you've stood on or walked on them all day.

We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (616) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, Mi 49083.

All tools are manufactured with safety in mind. But tragically, accidents often occur before steps are taken to eliminate other tool related hazards. Worker must be aware of the dangers of two types of tools:

Hand Tools: These are nonpowered and include anything from axes to wrenches. The greatest hazards posed by hand tools result from misuse and improper maintenance. So do the following to protect yourselves on the job:

} Use the right tool for the job.

} Examine tools for damage before use.

} Keep all tools in good condition with regular maintenance.

} Use the right protective equipment.

} Operate each tool according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Power Tools: These are categorized by their power source: electric, pneumatic, liquid fuel, hydraulic, and power-actuated. General precautions for these types of tools are:

} Never carry a power tool by the cord or hose, and never yank the cord or hose to disconnect it from the receptacle.

} Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges.

} Disconnect power tools when not in use, before servicing, and when changing accessories.

} Remove all damaged portable electric tools form use and tag them "Do Not Use."

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT CAN HELP

Since lifting is one of the primary causes of back injury, equipment designed to ease or eliminate living may be considered. Keep in mind, however, that mechanizing may present new or greater safety hazards.

Well designed tools should address body size and strength. Some manufacturers are responding to that need with reduced vibrations, lower noise levels, new handle designs that require less force and other improvements. Other ergonomic tool considerations to keep in mind:

* Size, weight and handle opening should feel comfortable to the operator.

* Soft-touch, anti-fatigue, static-dissipative foam grips distribute pressure smoothly to the hand.

* Wider handle width facilitates squeeze pressure over a wider area of the hand. However, these handles must be available in several sizes to properly fit each operator.

* Soft-touch, double action leaf springs minimize hand forces and pressures. They can be adjusted to the operator's desired feel.

* Black, anti-glare finish reduces visual fatigue. Some "ergonomically designed" tools haven't been changed much at all. The handle may be bent so the wrist can be kept straighter, but that hasn't solved all the problems. Companies must also be aware that new equipment may introduce new problems.