HAND TOOL SAFETY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. What are the risks posed by the improper use of hand tools?
   
   • If a chisel is used as a screwdriver, the tip of the chisel may break and fly off, hitting the user or other employees.
   • If a wooden handle on a tool, such as a hammer or an axe, is loose, splintered, or cracked, the head of the tool may fly off and strike the user or other employees.
   • If the jaws of a wrench are sprung, the wrench might slip.
   • If impact tools such as chisels, wedges, or drift pins have mushroomed heads, the heads might shatter on impact, sending sharp fragments flying toward the user or other employees.

2. What are some general precautions for using power tools?
   
   • Never carry a tool by the cord or hose.
   • Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges.
   • Keep all people not involved with the work at a safe distance from the work area.
   • Secure work with clamps or a vise, freeing both hands to operate the tool.
   • Avoid accidental starting. Keep fingers off of the switch while carrying a plugged-in tool.
   • Maintain tools with care; keep them sharp and clean for best performance.
   • Be sure to keep good footing and maintain good balance when operating power tools.
   • Dress appropriately - Loose clothing or jewelry can become caught in moving parts.

3. Does OSHA regulate the use of hand and power tools?
   
   • Yes. Hand and power tools are addressed in 29 CFR 1910, Subpart P, including guarding and maintenance requirements.

4. What size extension cord should I use with power tools?
   
   • Proper extension cord size is determined by the length of cord and the amperage required by the tool. Longer cords and higher amperage tools require larger gauge wire. To be safe, consult the owner’s manual for proper selection of extension cords.