



# Toolbox Talks

## Spotlight on Safety



## Hand Protection

It's one thing to have a minor cut on the back of your hand, but it's something totally different to be missing a finger or an entire hand. Protecting your hands is imperative because hand hazards, such as sharp or jagged objects that can cut or puncture your hand or skin, are all over the jobsite.

To keep your hands out of harm's way, follow these simple rules:

- ▲ Wear leather gloves when handling sharp-edged tools, broken glass, metal, or lumber.
- ▲ Stay clear of unguarded tools and equipment that could cut, lacerate, pinch, crush, or sever your hand or finger(s). Gears, pulley belt assemblies, rotating shafts, and power saws should be guarded.
- ▲ Wear proper gloves when handling acids or caustic elements. Check the Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or ask your supervisor to determine the proper type of chemical-resistant gloves.
- ▲ Never wash your hands with gasoline, paint thinner, kerosene, or any other chemical because they will remove the oils from your skin and could cause dermatitis. Only use soap and water or hand cleaners.
- ▲ Be aware of pinch points where hands and fingers can get crushed or pinched when handling pipe or lumber or when connecting pipe joints. Stay alert and make sure that the materials or equipment you are handling will not cause other materials to shift or move.
- ▲ Always remove rings and jewelry before starting work. Your rings, jewelry, and loose clothing can get caught and pull your hand into tools, machinery, or equipment.
- ▲ Always wear rubber gloves with the proper voltage rating when working with or near high-voltage electric lines. Rubber gloves should be visually inspected for punctures, cuts, or other damage prior to use.
- ▲ Watch out for burns when working with or near hot torches, metal, engines, or exhaust systems. Wear heavy-duty leather gloves if you must work with or near hot surfaces, materials, or equipment.
- ▲ Wear warm work gloves in cold weather to protect your hands from frostbite and never touch frozen metal with your bare hands.
- ▲ Don't wear gloves in situations where they can get caught in moving or rotating equipment.
- ▲ Know where your hands are at all times and never reach into moving equipment or machinery.
- ▲ Never reach into a space unless you know what is inside.
- ▲ Get first-aid treatment for minor hand injuries to avoid infection.

***Your hands are one of the most important tools at the jobsite.  
Protect them from injury so they will continue to work for you.***