

Tailgate Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

PROBLEM: One way to prevent injuries with hand and power tools is to use the right tool for the job. In other words, don't use a screwdriver as a crowbar. Cutting tools such as utility knives can be particularly hazardous if not used properly.

WHAT WE CAN ALL DO: Use heavy-duty CUTTERS when cutting heavy wire or bolts. Apply force at a right angle to the cutting edge. Never use them near live electrical circuits and wear eye protection.

Don't use claw hammers or crowbars to snap metal bands. Keep a gloved hand over the end that is likely to fly. When cutting bolts or rebar, hold the portion to be cut in one hand to keep it from flying.

Use one hand to operate TIN SNIPS and the other to hold the edges of the metal being cut. Don't lean over to cut the entire width when larger stock is being cut or when the material is likely to curl up. Never force, hammer, or step on the handle of tin snips to increase leverage. Use heavier snips.

When working with UTILITY KNIVES, wear hand guards, mesh or leather gloves. Make the cutting motion away from your body. If this isn't possible, keep your body completely clear of the cutting stroke.

Use slow, careful downward strokes to help a SAW cut directly across the material. Don't crowd or force a saw through the cut because it may buckle or fly out. Keep the saw sharp, properly set and free of cracks and broken teeth.

When using a HACKSAW, apply pressure on the downward stroke only. On the return stroke, lift the saw and lightly pull it back in the cut to protect the teeth. If you twist the blade or apply too much pressure, it may break. Cutting too fast will cause the blade to heat up and snap. Use oil to keep it lubricated while in use.

Many of these safety hints are common sense, while others came from experienced workers. In either case, there are some very good reasons for understanding and using them, including your own safety.

Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.