

**MODULE 3-01                      HAND TOOL DIGGING**

**ALL EMPLOYEES ARE TO BE TRAINED PRIOR TO USING EQUIPMENT**

**Purpose**

Youth offender job assignments can benefit the community, an OYA facility, and offenders living within the OYA facility. Job assignments provide youth with important learning opportunities: learning to follow instructions; learning to cooperate with others, and practicing positive social and work skills. They also provide youth with an opportunity to receive positive recognition for their accomplishments and achievement, and to receive pay for the work they do. A youth work assignment may include digging below ground to install signs, fences, trail maintenance, water line repair, and other activities. The use of hand tools to dig requires an ability to bend, twist, and lift. Job hazard analysis should be conducted before any digging occurs. The purpose of using any tools or equipment is to complete the assigned task in the safest, most effective and efficient way possible.



**Significant Environmental Aspects**

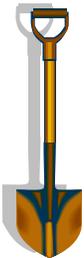
The use of hand tools to dig or clear ground have the potential to cause significant environmental impact to land use and resource protection. Digging can cause damage to sensitive plant or animal species and could disturb cultural resources. Any youth worker preparing to do land clearing or soil disturbance must have authorization from the supervisor for that activity. The youth worker must know before starting that soil disturbance has been reviewed and is authorized. Without that knowledge, the youth worker cannot proceed.

**I. Pre-Operation**

**A. Check with Supervisor to be sure you have approval for the digging operation.**

**B. Tool Inspection/Service**

- **Splinter/cracks** - Inspect handles for splinters/cracks.
- **Cutting edge** - Must be clean, straight and sharp.
- **Support Tools** - Carry extra digging tools, different types (back-up).
- **Posthole digger** - handles properly aligned.
- **Bolts tightened** in place and working properly.
- **Red tag** any tools or non-energized equipment requiring replacement or repair and remove from service.
- **Lockout/Tag-out (LO/TO)** any energized tools or equipment if repairs are needed, in accordance with Lockout/Tag-out procedure.



**II. Sustainable Operation**

**A. Resource Clearance** - Digging can disturb or harm sensitive natural or cultural resources. Check with your supervisor to be certain the area has been cleared for below-ground soil

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disturbance before starting to dig.

- B. **Resource Disturbance** – In rare instances, discovery of cultural artifacts is possible. If this happens, you must stop digging work immediately and contact your supervisor.
- C. **Other Resource Concerns** – Excess soil or open trenches can result in accidents or injury to youth, co-workers, or the public, and can have a negative impact on resource protection. Cover and sign/mark all excess materials or open trenches or holes if you leave the work site.

## III. Operation

### A. Body Mechanics

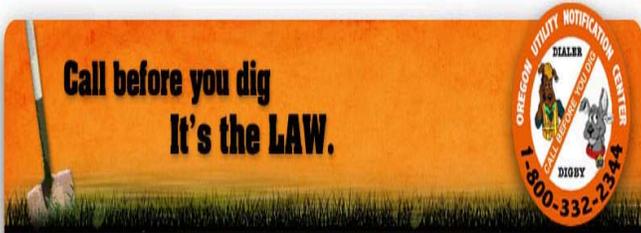
- **Stretch and warm up muscles through movement** before digging.
- **Avoid Twisting.** Don't exceed personal levels. If you have a pre-existing condition that may be affected by digging, you are to notify your manager.
- **Micro Breaks** - Take micro breaks to relieve muscle tension.
- **Prevent Injury** - Do not jump on tools if foot pressure is not adequate to loosen ground.
- **Wear appropriate footwear** - Based on weather, soil, and terrain conditions.

### B. Personal Protective Equipment

- **Hand Protection** - Leather gloves.
- **Eye protection** – Safety goggles/glasses are required when using a pick or where flying material is present.

### C. Site Assessment

- **Proper digging tool for task** - types, sizes, flat, round, trench, garden, pry bar, etc.



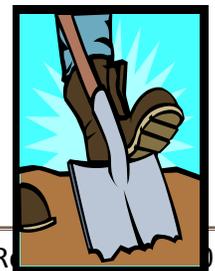
- **Preplan dig** - locate utility wires and pipes. Call Utility Company for a “LOCATE” if digging near public utilities. Be SURE you know where the emergency shut offs are for water, electricity, natural gas etc.... JUST in case!
- **Clean Up** - Remove excess dirt, any other debris or waste materials. To facilitate ease of removing excess

dirt, place dirt on sheet of plywood/plastic.

- **Power Equipment** - Use power equipment if and when possible.
- **More Than Four Foot Depth** - If going deeper than 4 feet, refer to Trenching and Shoring Procedure Module 03-02.

### D. Operation Includes

- **Pry Bar** - Use leverage, pry bar and pick.
- **Alternate methods** - Use a pick or alternate digging method if ground cannot be broken using one foot on tool.
- **Material Buildup** - Clean off soil buildup on tools.
- **Open Areas** - Barricade the immediate area in which you are digging if the larger area is open to visitors, or if visitors or co-workers are in the



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area around where you are working.

### **IV. Post-Operation - Clean Up, Hazard Warnings, Storage**

- Clean area where digging was done.
- Place hazard signs/tape to identify any hazard for the safety of co-workers the public.
- Clean and inspect tools and equipment for damage or needed maintenance.
- Red Tag any non-energized tools or equipment damaged during work project.
- Complete Lockout/Tag-out process for any energized tools or equipment damaged during work.
- Schedule repairs or replacement on damaged tools or equipment.

### **V. Demonstration of Proficiency**

Anyone expected to use digging equipment must be trained in that process and is required to demonstrate proficiency prior to signing training ledger.

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**1. Multiple Choice**

1. One important part of assessing the potential dig site is:
  - 1) Needs to be close to the restroom.
  - 2) Should be in the shade.
  - 3) Locate utility lines and wires.
  - 4) Use the shortest route.
  
2. When choosing digging tools, you should:
  - a) Pick the lightweight ones.
  - b) Inspect handles for cracks.
  - c) Grab the first one you find.
  - d) Take the ones out of someone else's work site.
  
3. What should you do before starting to dig?
  - a) Be sure you have Supervisor approval to dig.
  - b) Know where emergency shut offs are for water, electricity, gas lines etc.
  - c) Confirm you have access to emergency shutoffs, and they are not locked up with the key a mile away!
  - d) Confirm local or near-by shut offs are not covered over by bark dust, dirt, sandbox or take a special tool to access or turn the valve handle.
  - e) Stretch out and warm up muscles.
  - f) All of the above

**II. True/False**

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Power equipment such as backhoes, trenching machines and augers should be used whenever possible.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Twist your back as much as possible when shoveling.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Always wear proper footwear.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Always leave area open so people will see it.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Place dirt from digging on plastic or plywood to facilitate clean-up process.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Wear leather gloves for hand protection.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Use trenching support and shoring when digging more than 4 feet deep.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Sharpen tools before use.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Use eye protection when there is a risk of flying debris.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes the only thing you can do to break ground is use a shovel as a pogo stick by jumping up and onto it with both feet.

**III. Discussion Questions**

1. What should you do if the ground is too hard and hand tools are not effective?
2. When should you take micro breaks and stretch out muscles?

**Employee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pass** \_\_\_\_ **No Pass** \_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Take this test to your supervisor or trainer for sign off.