

Toolbox

Safety Series



KNIFE SAFETY

Statistics indicate that knives cause more disabling injuries than any other hand tool. People in all occupations are injured by knives - a stock boy in a supermarket produce department, a store clerk opening a box, or a slaughter house worker. We are all exposed to knife injuries, if only because a knife is a very handy and commonly used tool.

The principal hazard when using a knife, whether on or off the job, is that the user's hand may slip from the handle onto the blade, causing a painful and serious injury. A handle guard will reduce this hazard. Another cause of injury is the knife striking the free hand or the user's body.

Industrial knife safety principles remind us to always make a cutting stroke away from the body when possible. Adequate protection should be worn to protect the body and provisions made to hold the material steady. Steel-mesh gloves are available in select industries such as meatpacking where materials must be held in close proximity to the knife.

When on the job, carry a knife in a sheath or holder over the right or left hip, pointing backwards. Otherwise, a fall could cause a serious leg injury.

Storage of knives is also an important safety factor. Cutting edges should be covered and not exposed. Knives should be kept in their proper place and not left on benches, or the floor.

All cuts should receive first aid. Even the smallest cut can become infected, so treat all cuts.

Always use a knife only for what it is intended. Never use it as a screwdriver or pry bar. Never use a knife that is defective. Keep knives sharp and in good condition. A dull knife can cause you to put too much pressure on the object you're trying to cut. The blade could slip and slice you, or someone nearby.

If you're using the right knife for the job, it should cut without great difficulty. When you have to resort to force to make a knife cut, you're headed for trouble. It could result in an injury to you, damage to the knife, or damage to the material you're attempting to cut.

A famous statesperson once said, "Our patience will achieve more than our force." That's a good point to remember when using a knife.

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LEADER NOTES

Objective: To review the concepts of knife safety.

Potential Injuries: Cuts, severe lacerations, and amputations.

THE TALK – POINTS TO COVER

- Knives are a major source of disabling injuries.
- People in all occupations are injured by knives.
- The principal hazard when using a knife either on or off the job is the user's hand slipping from the handle onto the blade, causing a painful and serious injury.
- A handle guard will reduce this hazard.
- The cutting stroke should always be made away from the body.
- Adequate protection should be worn to protect the body and provisions made to hold the material steady.
- On the job carry a knife in a sheath or holder over the right or left hip pointing backwards.
- Storage of knives is an important safety factor.
- Cutting edges should be covered and not exposed.
- Knives should be kept in their proper place.
- All cuts should receive first aid. Even the smallest cut can become infected.
- Always use a knife for what it is intended.
- Keep knives sharp and in good condition.
- Forcing a knife cut, could result in an injury to you, damage to the knife, or damage to the material you're attempting to cut.

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Location: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Number of employees: _____

Number attending: _____

Record of those attending:

Name: (please print)	Signature:

Other safety issues or suggestions made by employees:

Manager's remarks: _____

Manager: _____
(Signature)

Supervisor: _____
(Signature)