

Safe Knife Handling

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the Occupational Safety web page.

Discussion Date:

General Information

The most common concern with using blades while working is an injury, such as a cut (e.g., laceration, puncture) or an amputation.



Proper Use

- Keep knives sharp. A sharp knife makes cutting easier and reduces the risk of applying unsafe pressure while cutting.
- Always cut away from yourself, ensuring no body parts are in the cutting path.
- Only use a knife for its intended purpose. A knife should not be used as a pry bar, can opener, chisel, punch, scraper, or screwdriver.
- Be aware of the blade location at all times.
- Carry the knife pointed down, blade retracted or folded away
- Place the item to be cut on a stable surface, securing the item with a holding device or with a protected hand.
- Keep the work area clean. Any materials on the floor could create a slip hazard.
- Use protective clothing such as cut resistant gloves, especially for the holding hand. Safety glasses can protect eyes if the blade shatters or breaks.

Knife Handling Safety Tips

- Seek guidance and training on safe use practices.
- Limit cutting above your head.
- Avoid using excessive pressure when cutting.
- Let the knife fall, then pick it up. Do not try to catch it.
- Stop cutting if you need to focus on something else.
- Do not put a knife in a sink full of soapy water. Wash the knife immediately after use.

Supervisor: Participants:	