
“Don’t Run with Scissors!” or Play With Tools

Home Improvement’s Tim “The Toolman” Taylor was a tool aficionado. He especially loved tools with power, so he rewired everything to give it more speed. Tim was also extremely accident-prone and quite often, downright unsafe, frequently landing himself in the hospital. While his antics were at times endearing, he was no model for power-tool safety. In fact, he could be the poster boy for what not to do. While they look small and harmless, power tools are dangerous when not properly used. They are responsible for nearly 10 percent of compensable injuries each year — injuries that often result in loss of life or limb.

“It’s All Fun and Games Until Somebody Loses an Eye.”

Yes, goofing off at work may make the job a bit more fun, but it can be a cause of injury. Air compressors, nail guns, floor waxers and other hand tools may offer some entertainment value, but often at a huge cost to workers and businesses. If your safety policy doesn’t address horseplay and its consequences, now is the time to update. Not only should horseplay be prohibited, workers must understand the importance of reporting any dangerous activity they observe, as horseplay often results in the injury of innocent bystanders or victims of a prank.

If I Had a Hammer...

I wouldn’t need a nail gun; however, nail guns get the job done quicker and more efficiently. Power tools were designed to make work easier. But they have a lot of power and move fast, so workers need to be focused and engaged. When training workers, remind them to always look at the tool they’re using, imagine what could go wrong, and then figure out what precautions to take to keep it from happening. Workers should be aware of any hidden dangers tools may have. For example, compressed air can be lethal: it can “pop” an eyeball from its socket, rupture internal organs or cause a brain hemorrhage. Nail guns can discharge a round of nails in an instant, and kickbacks from a power saw can hurl the tool at the user or another worker.

Bad Worker. Bad Tools?

Inattention, carelessness and inexperience are other common accident triggers. Despite training and warnings, workers often make poor decisions, and accidents happen. An unexpected event, such as a tool suddenly pulling toward the operator, can end badly, especially for the inexperienced worker, and overconfidence can make an experienced worker feel indestructible. Jobs that are repetitious, especially when trying to meet deadlines, can cause a worker to lose focus. Make sure workers stop periodically to refocus and start fresh, paying close attention to safety measures.

Freak (but Preventable!)



Safety Article for Chamber or Group Use

When a man fell off his ladder and ran an 18-inch drill bit through his eye, everyone called the accident “freak.” Well, maybe a little, but that doesn’t mean it couldn’t have been prevented. Workplace tragedy is often dubbed “unforeseen” or “freak,” but doing so just leaves doors open for the same thing to happen again. Proper training, a safety policy and strict rules regarding horseplay are just some of the ways to prevent accidents from happening. Make sure your business, your workers and their families are protected from senseless tragedy.

Accompanying blurb:

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