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Weekly Toolbox Talk

Hand Safety and Glove Use

It's easy to take hands and fingers for granted—yet our hands are regularly subject to injury at work. Most people don't recognize how essential hands are until a serious injury occurs.

BEST WORK PRACTICES

- Select the right hand or power tool for the job.
- Understand all operating instructions for required tools or machines.
- Inspect hand and power tools for electrical hazards and safety guards.
- Don't put hands into a danger (cutting) zone; use a push stick.
- When using a knife, cut away from the body.
- Follow best industry safe practices and safe work procedures using PPE.
- Use gloves that fit snugly to the hand.
- Use caution when working around machinery and rotating parts (i.e. belts, pulleys, chains and sprockets).

HAZARDS

- Laceration injury to the fingers is the leading occupational injury treated in U.S. emergency departments.
- Failing to wear gloves is giving up a big advantage in hand safety.
- Wearing gloves alone will not keep your hands safe. Glove use appears to lower the risk of low energy transfer injuries, such as lacerations and punctures. However, glove use is not associated with a lower risk of sustaining injuries in which the energy transferred to the hands exceeds the physical properties of the glove (e.g. crush, fracture, or dislocating injuries). This is why following all of the best work practices is key to keeping hands safe.