



Tool Safety

eSafetyLine

Circular Saw Safety Tips

The circular saw makes life on the job site much easier by allowing cuts to be made just about anywhere. This convenience comes with a cost by increasing the hazards at a job. As with any tool, an ounce of prevention can go a long way to preventing work site injuries. By treating the circular saw with the respect it deserves everyone can go home with all the fingers and toes they showed up with. The following are the top ten safety tips for using a circular saw:

1. Always make sure you are using the correct blade for the job and that it's properly seated and tightened. Always use a sharp blade. Dull blades are more likely to bind and overheat and are generally more dangerous.
2. Check the blade guard. Be certain that it is in good shape and functioning properly.
3. Set the depth of the blade to no more than 1/4 inch more than the thickness of the wood to be cut. The wood is more likely to kick back if too much blade exposed.
4. The work surface should be supported on both sides. Clamp it on one side if you have to.
5. Look for knots and nails before you begin and avoid them if possible. If that isn't possible, be cautious when approaching them.
6. Be sure to start the blade before it meets the work.

7. Stand to the side when you saw in case the wood is kicked back, and don't over-reach. This helps to prevent getting hit with the board. You should always have both feet planted firmly on the floor.
8. It should never be necessary to push the saw, just guide it with a little pressure.
9. Let go of the trigger if the blade binds, and stick a wooden shim in the cut to release the blade.
10. Wait for the blade to stop before removing it from the wood.

By following these simple 10 safety tips, many injuries with a circular saw can be avoided. Had this employee done so, his day may have ended much differently. On 30 December 2003, a handyman was told by his supervisor to cut 2 inch by 4 inch wall stud extensions back to a wall. He climbed an 8-foot ladder and began to cut the stud extensions. While cutting the wood, the blade kicked back and knocked the employee off the ladder. The saw blade cut off his left index finger. It was later discovered that the saw blade was not correctly seated nor tightened sufficiently causing the blade to kick back. The worker's body position while making the cuts also contributed to the injury.

Discussion Questions

List three safety tips for using a circular saw.

How did body position contribute to this accident?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/_____

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date