

safety matters

Construction

From your safety partners at Peabody Insurance Agency

Protecting Your Hands

Of the many tools that we have available, our hands are the most valuable. They provide us with the dexterity necessary to perform precise maneuvers that even the most advanced technology cannot replicate. Even the simplest tasks are difficult for a person that does not have full use of his or her hands.

Working in construction puts your hands at a higher risk. Hand injuries on the job are quite common, but many are preventable. There are many things you can do to keep your hands safe, and here are a few of the most common.

Make Use of Machine Guards

Never operate machinery that does not have a working guard to protect your hands. Always use a lockout device on machinery when you have to reach into it for any reason. Immediately replace guards when you remove them. When safety guards are missing from machinery, hands, fingers and arms can easily be caught, amputated or crushed.

Wear Gloves

Always protect your hands by wearing work gloves when handling rough materials or performing operations where you are using your hands to lift or move objects. An Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) study revealed that 70 percent of workers experiencing hand injuries were not wearing gloves. The remaining 30 percent were making use of damaged, inadequate

or inappropriate types of gloves for the job. Choose the right gloves for the task and inspect them thoroughly before use.

Be Cautious of Sharp Objects

Utilize the correct safety procedures when handling knives, box cutters and other sharp objects. Never attempt to pick up broken glass, nails or other sharp objects not meant for handling with bare hands; always use appropriate gloves or a broom.

Remove Rings

No matter how much sentimental value they carry, rings put your hands in grave danger on the job. They can very easily catch on machinery and other objects, resulting in lacerations, amputations or broken bones. Always remove rings before beginning work.

Stay Alert for Pinch Points

When using your hands to move an object, whether it is on a hand truck or you are carrying it, be sure your path is wide enough for you to move through safely before you start the job. When you set a heavy object down, be aware of the placement of your hands. Always be alert for possible pinch points.

Speak Up

If you are unsure about the type of gloves to wear to adequately protect yourself, or if you have any other issues regarding the protection of your hands on the job, talk to your supervisor.

Even the simplest tasks are difficult for a person that does not have full use of his or her hands. Protect yours with these safety guidelines.

