



## Ten Rules to Save Your Ten Fingers

It has been estimated that in a given year there will be at least half a million accidents in which hands are severed, crushed, mangled, or burned.

That number could be greatly reduced by strict adherence to the 10 rules listed below—both on and off the job.

- 1. Beware of pinch points.** Train yourself to recognize pinch points and avoid placing your hands and fingers in such hazardous spots.  
**[Note:** This would be a good place to have group members report on pinch points they've encountered in the workplace, and for you to mention (without naming names, of course) pinch-point injuries that have appeared on your own first-aid and recordable injury logs. The same "it can—and did—happen here" approach can also be taken with other items in the list.]
- 2. Expect the unexpected.** When using wrenches, persuaders, bars, and other hand tools with which you expect resistance, anticipate that the tool might slip or the object to which pressure is being applied may suddenly give way. Failure to anticipate such an occurrence could result in painful and serious injuries to hands and fingers.
- 3. Inspect tools.** Check to see if they are in good condition and safe to use. A wrench with worn or spread jaws, a mushroom-headed chisel, a worn screwdriver, or a hammer with a cracked handle are examples of defective tools, which are frequently the cause of injuries to hands and fingers.
- 4. Do not work on moving equipment unnecessarily.** If the equipment can be stopped, do so. Working on moving equipment presents a real threat to hands and fingers.
- 5. Replace machine guards following repairs that require removal of guards.** The presence of machine guards is an important factor in keeping hands and fingers out of dangerous areas.
- 6. Be mindful of equipment that starts automatically.** Never work on such equipment without first de-energizing it and eliminating the possibility of automatic startup. That's what our lockout/tagout procedure is all about—and you should exercise the same care at home.
- 7. De-energize electrical equipment prior to working on it.** Flash burns caused by electrical equipment shorting out are an ever-present threat to hands and fingers when work

around such equipment is being performed.

- 8. Avoid touching lines or equipment that is hot.** Every hot line or hot piece of equipment is a potential source of painful injury to any hand or finger that comes in contact with it.
- 9. Be mindful when closing doors.** Keep hands and fingers clear. It is a safe bet that everyone has at one time or another caught a finger in a door. Attention to detail can prevent this painful and sometimes serious injury. Car doors seem to be especially dangerous for children's fingers.
- 10. If the work being performed requires gloves, use them.** Gloves offer protection from wood and metal splinters, caustics, acids, electrical burns, thermal burns, chemicals, and many other sources of injury.

**[Note:** Maybe workers can add more precautions to this list. Why not give them the opportunity?]

**In summary:** "The workplace and the world are full of hand traps." Don't expose your hands and fingers to them. Think as you work. Protect your hands and fingers by using foresight and avoiding those situations and actions that carry a potential for injury.

### HOW THIS TOPIC APPLIES TO THIS JOB:

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### ATTENDEES: Print Name / Signature (use back if necessary)

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### DATE:

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### SUPERVISOR / FOREMAN SIGNATURE:

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