



Toolbox Talk

July 2023



Working Safely with Power Tools

You are all working with power tools daily, so you must know how to use them properly and safely. The July issue of Toolbox Talk examines the critical topic of the safe and responsible use of powered hand tools.

As you work through your apprenticeship, it is essential to prioritise your safety and well-being. By following proper guidelines and adopting good practices, you can reduce potential risks and hazards associated with powered hand tools. This comprehensive guide will explore critical aspects such as tool usage, guards and handles, electrical safety, and other vital considerations to ensure safety when working with these tools.



Safe Tool Usage



1. CHOOSE THE RIGHT TOOL

Selecting the appropriate tool for a specific task is paramount. Using the correct tool ensures efficiency and minimises the risk of accidents. Consider such as tool power, size, and capabilities when selecting.



2. INSPECT TOOLS REGULARLY

Inspect your tools before each use to identify any signs of wear, damage, or defects. Check for loose parts, frayed cords, or broken handles. Do not use cracked or faulty tools; report any issues to your supervisor.



3. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Wearing the necessary PPE is crucial for safeguarding yourself from potential injuries. Use safety glasses, ear protection, gloves, and appropriate clothing to protect against flying debris, loud noises, and contact with hazardous materials.



4. TRAINING AND FAMILIARITY

Receive thorough training on the proper handling, operation, and maintenance of each powered hand tool before using it. Familiarise yourself with the user manual and safety instructions provided by the manufacturer. Seek guidance from experienced professionals when necessary.



5. ERGONOMICS AND POSTURE

Adopt proper body posture and ergonomics while using tools. Maintain a stable stance, avoid awkward angles, and use your weight effectively to reduce strain. Adjust tool handles to a comfortable grip and position to prevent fatigue and musculoskeletal injuries.

Guards and Handles



1. GUARD USAGE

Ensure that all tools equipped with safety guards have them properly attached and in good working condition. Guards protect you from potential contact with moving parts, blades, or cutting edges. Never remove or bypass guards unless specifically instructed by the manufacturer.



2. SHIELDING & ENCLOSURES

Use appropriate enclosures or shields to protect yourself and others nearby when working with tools that generate sparks, debris, or other hazards. Enclose work areas or use barriers to prevent projectiles from causing harm.



3. HANDLE SECURELY

Always maintain a firm grip on the tool's handle and ensure it is clean, dry, and free from oil or other slippery substances. A secure grip minimizes the risk of losing control and accidents. Avoid wearing gloves when using rotary or reciprocating tools, as they may increase the chances of entanglement.



4. TWO-HANDED OPERATION

When specified by the manufacturer, use both hands to operate the tool. This provides better stability and control and reduces the risk of injury. Follow instructions on how to position your hands and fingers during the operation safely.



Electrical Safety



1. POWER SOURCE INSPECTION

Before plugging in a power tool:

- Check all cords and electrically powered equipment has been tested and tagged
- Inspect the power source, cords, and plugs for damage, fraying, or exposed wires.
- Do not use tools with damaged cords or plugs.
- Use tools that have been appropriately grounded or have double-insulated features.

2. EXTENSION CORD USAGE

If you need an extension cord, ensure it is in good condition and rated for the tool's power requirements. Avoid using excessive cord lengths to minimise voltage.



Summary

You can reduce the risk of accidents and injuries by following proper guidelines, such as choosing the right tool for the task, inspecting tools regularly, wearing appropriate PPE, receiving proper training, and practising good ergonomics. Always remember the importance of using guards and handles correctly, implementing electrical safety measures, organizing work areas, and reporting incidents. Incorporating these practices into your daily work can create a safer and more productive environment using powered hand tools. Stay vigilant, prioritize safety, and confidently power up your engineering journey!



Remember **STAR** = Good Work Practices **Stop Think Assess Act Review**

Health and safety reps

Your Health and Safety (H&S) Reps are here to represent and assist you (apprentices) in all health and safety matters. If you would like to talk to an H&S Rep or have any H&S issues, feel free to contact any one of them. They will be more than happy to help.

Waikato

Elizabeth Humberstone 027 806 8879

Wellington

Joseph Toeaso 027 419 4730

ATNZ Staff

Kylie Mason 027 431 5877

Jo Brierley 027 438 8195

Alan Lockett 027 239 6197

Health and safety summary May/June

Remember to keep reporting accidents and incidents so we can all learn from them.

It's great to see near misses being reported and we encourage you to keep reporting these so we can prevent an actual injury happening.

- S** Stop
- T** Think
- A** Assess
- A** Act
- R** Review

Lost time injuries	1
First aid injuries	1
No injury	3
Medical treatment injuries	1
Near miss	0
Non work injuries	5
Restricted work injuries	1
Pain/discomfort	0
Total Incident	12

Incidents

No injury	Singed hair
Nature of injury	Powered equipment
Incident	Apprentice singed hair while metal spraying. The flame was from a burner that acts as a pilot flame to light the metal spraying torch. The apprentice got too close to the pilot flame
Immediate actions taken	Washed hair and checked for burns
Corrective actions	Communicated to apprentice apply STAAR to their work practice and to be aware of surroundings while metal spraying
No injury	Burn to overalls
Nature of injury	Welding
Incident	Apprentice was tacking welding ute decks when their overalls caught fire causing their polar fleece to melt under their overalls. The apprentice noticed this and patted the fire out. Apprentice was wearing cotton overalls of the correct size at the time
Immediate actions taken	Patted out flame
Corrective actions	Communicated to apprentice to be aware of surroundings when completing tasks and think about body position in relation to the task. Apply STAAR to their work practice
Restricted work injury	Knee sprain
Nature of injury	Manual handling
Incident	Apprentice was carrying a ladder and stumbled causing knee to give way
Immediate actions taken	First aid applied and went to doctor for further assessment
Corrective actions	Follow STAAR process. Communication to all staff to be aware and take time completing tasks. Consider changing to a better position while doing task. Consider using a manual handling aid or asking for more help lifting
First aid injury	Rust in eye
Nature of injury	Foreign body
Incident	Apprentice got a piece of rust in their left eye. Unsure how it entered their eye as they had safety glasses on at the time
Immediate actions taken	First aid applied
Corrective actions	Ensure hands are clean before touching eyes. Brush off clothing and hair after working to get rid of any dust and any potential metal fragments

Incidents

Medical treatment injury	Cut to finger
Nature of injury	Powered hand tools/equipment
Incident	The apprentice was holding a gasket trying to make the hole bigger on the dye grinder. As they were doing this the grinder spun around causing a cut requiring butterfly stitches to their finger. It was noted that the apprentice had been rushing to complete work and didn't take the time to use the tools properly
Immediate actions taken	First aid applied and went to doctor for further assessment
Corrective actions	Communicated to the apprentice to take the time to use PPE and complete tasks following the correct process and not to take shortcuts to save time. Apply STAAR to their work practice
No injury	Burn to overalls
Nature of injury	Welding
Incident	Apprentice was using the grinder and sparks were showering their leg when their overalls caught fire. The apprentice noticed this and patted the fire out immediately. Apprentice was wearing cotton overalls of the correct size at the time
Immediate actions taken	Patted out flame
Corrective actions	Communicated to apprentice to be aware of surroundings when completing tasks and think about body position in relation to the task. Apply STAAR to their work practice
Lost time injury	Fracture to finger
Nature of injury	Manual handling
Incident	Co-worker asked the apprentice to help them move a heavy plate. They grabbed an end each to move the plate. They planned to drop the plate down but missed timed it. The co-worker drop their end before the apprentice, resulting in the plate landing on the apprentices finger causing a fracture
Immediate actions taken	First aid applied and went to doctor for further assessment
Corrective actions	Host to conduct a Tool Box Topic about Manual Handling, Planning lifts and Communication at all times through lift. Apply STAAR to their work practice