

MCAA Toolbox Safety Talks



44

Safe Use of Power Tools

A number of different power tools are used in the mechanical industry. You are very familiar with most of them; however, occasionally a new or an improved tool comes around. Before you use a tool that you are not familiar with take the time to read the owner's manual. Focus on the hazard warning information and safe operation sections.

- Be sure to select the right tool for the job. Never use a tool or attachment for a job that requires heavier duty tools.
- All power tools should be grounded or double-insulated. Don't use them if they are not. If the ground prong is missing from the plug, take the tool out of service immediately and tag it with a "Danger — Do Not Use" tag so no one else will use it either. If the tool wasn't made with a ground prong, make sure it is double-insulated. Look for the words "Double Insulated" or the symbol of a small square inside of a slightly larger square.
- Make sure that the tool is plugged into a circuit that is protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). This should be standard practice whenever possible, but it is especially important when working in a wet or damp environment.
- Keep all of the tool guards in place unless the tool has been unplugged for cleaning. Replace the guard before you reenergize the tool.
- When using the tool don't wear jewelry, loose clothing, long hair or anything else that could get caught in the moving parts.
- Don't force the tool. If there is unusual resistance turn the tool off to find out why. Fix the problem before you proceed.
- Use the right personal protective equipment. Always use either safety glasses or safety goggles and use a face shield where appropriate.
- Make sure that your work is secured in a vice or on a table with clamps and keep the blades or bits sharp and clean.