

Safety Note #103

HORIZONTAL SAW SAFETY



Photograph Courtesy of Kearney REC

According to information available from the Consumer Product Safety Commission, a total of about 14,500 people were treated in hospitals for power saw injuries during 2004. Of this total, approximately 10,000 injuries were to fingers and hands.

California Code of Regulations Title 8, Section 3203 (7) requires employees to be trained on the equipment they use in the workplace.

Pre-Use Activities

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the horizontal saw operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Before using, always inspect the horizontal saw for damage, disrepair, or missing parts, including assessing the condition of the power cord. Assure all guards are in place and secured.
- If a horizontal saw fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the saw from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.

Operating Precautions

- Always wear industrial-quality safety glasses or a face shield when using a horizontal saw.
- Never wear gloves, a tie, loose clothing, a watch, rings, or jewelry when using a horizontal saw. Tie long hair back or secure under a cap.
- As appropriate, wear suitable hearing protection.
- Use the correct saw blade for the type of material to be cut. Replace damaged saw blades.
- Always assure the work piece is clamped securely in the vise before starting the horizontal saw.
- When the horizontal saw is operating, keep fingers and hands away from the saw blade.
- Never start the horizontal saw when the blade is in contact with the work piece.
- Always use a cutting speed that is appropriate for the type of saw blade being used and material being cut.
- When cutting long or wide work pieces, use the roller supports.
- Always disconnect the power source before changing or adjusting the saw blade or performing horizontal saw maintenance.
- When finished, clean shavings and scrap from the horizontal saw work area and dispose of in trash.