

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting

The logo for Apollo Mechanical Contractors is contained within a dark blue oval. The word "Apollo" is written in a white, cursive script font. Below it, the words "MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS" are written in a white, sans-serif, all-caps font, flanked by two horizontal white lines. Underneath that, the tagline "Building People Who Build Great Things" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Apollo

— MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS —
Building People Who Build Great Things

Home Healthy - Home Safe

Date: March 2023

Power Tool Safety – Securing Material

Power tools are a part of our everyday process in the construction industry. We often think of power tool safety as the same for each tool, and for the most part this can be applied universally. Make sure guards are in worker order and not removed. Inspect the cords and verify a ground prong is on the plug if needed. There are things we instinctively check as we use tools over and over, and the same goes with things we accidentally miss as well, because we use the same tools over and over. This is why it is important to fix or remove tools that are damaged or out compliance. Using it “Just this onetime” often leads to a habit of complacency.

One hazard that struggle to identify as a company is the proper securement of materials that are being cut or modified. Apollo has had several porta-band injuries due to the fact that the user is using one hand to run the bandsaw and one hand to hold a piece of material. Next thing you know, the blade or material jumps, and now the user is going to get stitches. We have seen this happen with all types of tools and materials throughout the years. Be sure to use things like vices or c-clamps to secure material before working on it with some type of power tool. Another action that helps mitigate material securement issues is having a proper work space, bench height, to work from. This allows the craftsman the ability to use proper body position, technique, and gives a place where material securing can occur.

Next time you see a co-worker using a grinder or porta-band to cut material, without using a proper securing device, stop them and help them find the right materials to complete the job safely and efficiently.

HEALTHY OR SAFETY REMINDER: At Apollo most hand injuries occur from material being improperly secured while being worked on. Gloves are not the answer to prevent hand injuries, protective gloves are the last line of defense for hand injuries, the only way to prevent injuries is to plan them out of your work. Following proper procedures helps minimize your exposure, but the risk of injury is always there.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. Do you have what you need to secure material before working with it?
2. Can you name a few ways material securement is crucially important to the safety of people?
3. Has anyone had a close call or been injured by holding material they were working on with a cutting tool?