

A WORD ABOUT SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Safety is everyone's business and is an important consideration at any construction sight. Building construction can be one of the most dangerous occupations. Since Habitat work crews normally have a high proportion of inexperienced people building, they must pay particular attention to safety. Try to be conscious of the safety of others as well as yourself. An observer can often see danger better than the worker involved in the project. Be cautious at all times, and ask questions. Do not go ahead with a project you are uncertain as to how it is done, or if you are unable to do it.

Safety is based on knowledge, skill, and attitude of care and concern. Supervisors should instruct each worker about the correct and proper procedures for performing each task. This should familiarize the worker with the potential hazards of doing a project and advise him or her as to how such hazards can be eliminated or minimized. It is very important that we at Habitat know about safe work practices and follow them.

GUIDELINES FOR A SAFE ATTITUDE

1. Think before you do your work or task
2. If you are uncertain about how to do a task, or operate a power tool, ask a supervisor
3. Concentrate on your task and eliminate distractions
4. Know where the first aid kit is located and how to get emergency help
5. Inspect all power tools, ladders, hand tools, and scaffolding on a daily basis.
6. Advise your supervisor immediately of any unsafe or hazardous toll or condition

PRPOER CLOTHING AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Proper clothing is as essential to safety as the proper selection and use of tools. Wear clothes and gloves that are appropriate for the work and weather conditions. Loose clothing is dangerous around power tools. Workers shall wear work boots or thick-soled shoes at all times when on the construction site. Any worker wearing sandals or other inappropriate footwear shall not be permitted on the worksite.

Hard hats are to be worn while doing demolition work, during framing, or when required by a supervisor, and are to be made available to workers on each job site.

Protective glasses will be available for every construction worker. A worker must wear protective glasses any time he or she is operating a power tool of ANY kind or when instructed by the supervisor.

Each worker must wear a dust mask when sanding, installing insulation, or when instructed by the supervisor.

Ear plugs must be worn when using a power tool for a prolonged period of time or when instructed by the supervisor. Earplugs will be made available to workers at each job site.

POWER TOOLS AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

A power tool should not be used without proper instruction on it's use, and on what can happen if improperly used. Instruction should be done by a qualified person, and should be given to all workers, including experienced "do-it-yourselfers". The trainee should use the power tools in the presence of the instructor, until he or she is proficient in the usage, approved by the trainer.

Never lower a power tool by it's cord, nor carry it thus. Clean tools daily. Power tools should be checked for any defects and proper grounding before use. Defective tools should not be used, and either be reported to the supervisor, or labeled and placed in the tool room for repair immediately. **DO NOT WAIT UNTILL THE END OF THE DAY.**

To avoid electrical shock, the following rules should be followed:

1. A three-pronged plug must be used on all electrical tools.
2. Extension cords must not have frayed insulation or be fastened with staples, hung from nails, or suspended from wires.

3. All temporary lights must be equipped with non-conductive guards.

HAND TOOLS

Always select the correct type and size of tool for your work, and be sure it is sharp and properly adjusted. Guard against using the tool if the handle is loose or in poor condition. Dull tools are hazardous to use because excessive force must be used to make them work. Oil or dirt on the tool may cause it to slip and cause injury. Hold tools correctly when using them. Most edged tools should be held in both hands, with the cutting action away from the body. Avoid using your hand or fingers in guiding the tool.

Handle and carry tools with care. Keep edged and pointed tools turned downward. Carry only a few tools at a time unless mounted in a special holder designed to carry more than one, or a tool belt. Anyone working with a hammer at a height should wear a hammer hoop tool belt, and when not using a hammer, should keep it in the tool belt and not set on an inclination or open board. Do not carry sharp tools in your pockets. When not in use tools should always be put back where they belong, not necessarily where they were found.

A WORD ON SAWS

DON'T BIND THE SAWBLADE. When cutting a long piece of wood, be it a board or paneling, the blade may bind and the saw may catch and "kick-back" towards the user causing injury. Use wood shims or shingles to spread the wood apart as you go along.

KEEP THE BLADEGUARD WORKING. A spring-activated blade guard often can become bent and won't slide quickly, or the spring can become stretched, so the return is slow. Repair damaged guards as soon as it happens, and never prop the guard back out of the way.

Support what you are working on properly. Never attempt to cut something that could tilt or fall and cause the saw to slip.

TAKE YOUR TIME. It is far more important to work slowly and safely than to rush a project and cause injury.

LADDERS

Inspect a ladder before setting foot on it. If a ladder is unsafe, don't use it! Look for wear and tear, loose rungs, and defects.

Use a ladder that will reach the work. An extension ladder should reach three feet above the work level. Move your ladder when you work. If both of your shoulders are outside the ladder while you are reaching to far, you may come tumbling down. While using an extension ladder, use the "4 to 1 rule". For every four feet of height, move the ladder one foot away from the wall. A ladder is pitched at the proper angle if you can grab a rung at shoulder height.

Place your ladder on solid footing. If there is danger of the ladder moving, tie it down. If there is a danger the ladder will be hit, barricade it. If the feet of the ladder are not level, dig the ground out under the foot that is the highest, with the claw of a hammer rather than raise the other with blocks.

Never use an aluminum ladder in the vicinity of electrical lines, and never use a ladder outdoors during inclement weather or on very windy days.

Carry tools and equipment in proper carrying devices, and keep your hands free when climbing. When climbing, always face the ladder.

SCAFFOLDING

All scaffolding that is elevated 10 feet or more must be equipped with safety railings. All scaffolds must be equipped with a toe board to eliminate the possibility that tools or debris will be kicked or pushed off accidentally and hit someone below. When erecting scaffolding, provide adequate sills for the scaffold posts, and use base plates. Use adjusting screws, not blocks, when on an uneven grade. Make sure you plumb and level scaffolding, and do not force end bracket when constructing the scaffolding.

Many scaffolding accidents are caused by defective planking. Use only graded and inspected lumber for planking. Inspect planking daily for splits and knots, and remove defected or damaged planking.

A CLEAN WORKPLACE

A clean work site is a safe place to work. This refers to the neatness and good order of the construction site. Maintaining good housekeeping contributes to the efficiency of the worker and is important in preventing accidents.

Position building materials and supplies in carefully laid out piles to allow adequate aisles and walkways. Clean up all rubbish and scrap materials on a daily basis. Do not permit blocks of wood, nails, bolts, empty cans, pipe, wire, or other materials to accumulate on the job site. Never leave a work site unguarded unless all tools and materials have been properly secured.

POISONS AND TOXINS

The poisons and toxic substances that can be found most often are asbestos, lead oxides, solvents, and animal feces. Special care must be taken when you come in contact with any of these substances, or any unfamiliar substance.

If you discover asbestos fiber being used as a pipe, boiler, or heating duct insulation, contact your supervisor immediately. Do not attempt to remove the asbestos on your own.

Scraping exterior woodwork, demolishing lead-painted walls, and stripping old mill work are the principle ways that workers can be exposed to lead chips, dust, and particles. Contact your supervisor if you find any lead painted surfaces.

Masks are the best protection against breathing germs that can be borne in dust containing animal feces (such as rodent droppings).

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

If someone is injured on the job, contact your supervisor immediately and summon any needed medical help. You should also use the supplies in the first aid kit to stabilize the injury as much as possible until medical help arrives. Your supervisor is trained in first aid, and will help with any injured worker. Insurance forms necessary to obtain emergency medical care are located in every first aid kit.

Habitat for Humanity Freeborn/Mower Safety Check List

Safety First!!

Safety rules for volunteer workers

1. Report any condition that looks unsafe
2. Wear a hard hat when someone is working above you
3. Wear ear plugs in high noise areas
4. Wear safety glasses or other eye protection when operating power saws or other equipment that may throw off small particles
5. Make sure blade guards are in place when operating power saws
6. Use a respirator when working in dusty atmospheres
7. Wear leather gloves when handling wood or metal products
8. Avoid stepping on electrical power cords, especially in wet locations
9. Keep electrical power cords off the ground as much as possible
10. Make sure that ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is in place before plugging in electrical power cords
11. Do not use broken or Malfunctioning tools, especially those with electrical problems
12. Do not use ladders as work platforms; use scaffolding instead
13. Do not use aluminum ladders around electrical power lines
14. Make sure that guardrails and toe boards are in place when working on scaffolding platforms more than ten feet high
15. If you cut yourself, report to your supervisor immediately for first aid
16. If someone else cuts him/herself and blood gets on you, report this immediately to your supervisor
17. Do not enter a trench more than five feet in depth unless a Co-worker is present on ground level to sound an alarm and render assistance in case of emergency
18. If asbestos is present, avoid touching, handling or disturbing it. Let specialists handle it
19. If lead-based paint is present, use extra precautions-wash hands before eating.

Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of *Habitat for Humanity work crew safety*, that I have read it and reviewed it with my supervisor, and that I understand its contents.

Signature of worker

Name of worker (Please Print)

Date

This form must be completed and returned to the supervisor of your work crew.