

UT House Medics

Safety Overview

Thank you for volunteering to help those less privileged. In an effort to maintain safety at the work site, we request you review the following items:

The good volunteer recognizes that safety is an important part of the job. They know that accidents are prevalent in building construction and that they often result in partial or total disability. Even minor cuts and bruises can be painful. Safety is based on knowledge, skill, and an attitude of care and concern. The volunteer should know correct and proper procedures for performing the work and be familiar with the potential hazards, including how they can be minimized or eliminated.

The carpenter must develop a good attitude toward safety. This means that they believe in the importance of safety and are willing to give time and effort to a continual study of the safest ways to perform the work. It means that they will work carefully and follow the rules.

Clothing:

Wear clothing which is appropriate for the work and weather conditions. Trousers or overalls should fit properly and have legs without cuffs. Shirts and jackets should be kept buttoned. Sleeves should also be buttoned or rolled up. Never wear loose or ragged clothing, especially around moving machinery. Shoes should be sturdy. Tennis shoes or lightweight canvas shoes may not provide adequate protection from protruding nails.

Headgear should provide the necessary protection, be comfortable, permit good visibility, and shade the eyes.

Personal Protective Equipment:

Safety glasses should be worn whenever the work involves even the slightest hazard to the eyes. Standard specifications state that a safety lens must withstand the blow of a 1/8" steel ball dropped from a height of 50 inches. Wear gloves of an appropriate type when handling rough materials, and a mask or respirator when working in dusty areas or where finishing materials are being sprayed.

Hand Tools:

Always select the correct type and size of tool for the work and be sure it is sharp and properly adjusted. Guard against using any tool if the handle is loose or in poor condition. Dull tools are hazardous to use because excessive force must be applied to make them cut. Oil or dirt on a tool may cause it to slip and cause an injury. When using tools, hold the tool correctly. Most edged tools should be held in both hands with the cutting action away from the user's body. Be careful when using your hand or fingers as a guide. Handle and carry tools with considerable care. Keep edged and pointed tools turned downward. Carry only a few tools at one time unless they are mounted in a special holder. Do not carry sharp tools in pockets of clothing. When not in use, tools should be kept in special boxes, chests, or cabinets.

Power Tools:

Before operating any power tool or machine, you must be thoroughly familiar with the way in which it works and with the correct procedures to follow. In general, when learning to use equipment the correct way you must also learn to use it the safe way.

Good Housekeeping:

Neatness and good order of the construction site. Maintaining a satisfactory level of orderliness contributes to the efficiency of the worker and is an important factor in the prevention of accidents.

Place building materials and supplies in carefully laid piles, positioned to allow adequate aisles and walkways. Rubbish and scrap should be placed in containers until disposal can be made.

Keep tools and equipment not being used in panels or chests. This will provide protection for the tools and, more importantly, for the workers. In addition to improving efficiency and safety, good housekeeping also helps maintain a better appearance of the construction project which in turn contributes to the morale of all workers.

Ladders:

Ladders should be checked at frequent and regular intervals, and their use should be limited to climbing from one level to another. The performance of work while being supported on a ladder is hazardous and should be kept to a minimum.

Falling Objects:

When working on upper levels of a structure, a worker should be especially cautious in handling tools and materials so that there is no chance of them falling on workers below. Do not place tools on the edge of scaffolds, stepladders, window sills or on any other surface where they might be knocked off. If long pieces of lumber must be placed temporarily on end and leaned against the side of the structure, be sure that they will not fall sideways.

Lifting and Carrying:

Injuries, such as hernias, may be caused by improper lifting or carrying of heavy objects. When lifting, stand close to the load, bend the knees and grasp the object firmly. Next, lift by straightening the legs and keeping the body as nearly vertical as possible. To lower an object, reverse the procedure.

When carrying a heavy load, do not turn or twist the body. Rather, make adjustments in position by shifting the feet. If the load is heavy or bulky, secure help from others. Never underestimate the weight to be moved, and never overestimate your own ability and strength. Always secure assistance when carrying long pieces of lumber.

First Aid:

A knowledge of first aid is important. Workers should understand approved procedures and be able to exercise good judgment in applying them. Remember that an accident victim may receive additional injury from extensive treatment by an unqualified person.