



Tool Box Talk



HAND SAFETY

November 2017

Our hands are the most valuable and widely used tools in the workplace. Proper glove selection is essential in protecting these tools from on-the-job hazards. The wrong gloves risk injury to the worker and loss of productivity. Knowing which type of gloves work for the job task will greatly increase worker safety and productivity. It is important to remember that no single glove will provide protection in all applications or against every hazard or substance.

Proper Glove Selection

During the glove selection process, identify key elements that are required to perform the job safely:

- ❖ Are chemical hazards present? Do the chemical hazards occur in liquid, gas, powder, or vapor form? Will workers' hands be subject to light splashes or total immersion?
- ❖ Are abrasions and punctures from sharp objects a problem? Many gloves are designed to protect from slashes caused by sharp objects, but few provide high levels of puncture resistance from objects such as the ragged edges of a piece of metal or glass. Will the abrasions or punctures occur to the palm, top of the hand, or both?
- ❖ Is a secure grip vital to the application? When workers cannot grasp objects securely, especially those that are wet or oily, the objects may slide through their hands and result in injuries or damaged products.
- ❖ Is dexterity important? Working at high speeds require having the dexterity and tactile sensitivity to handle small parts or objects quickly.
- ❖ Is protection or dexterity the priority? Thinner-gauge gloves offer more dexterity; heavier-gauge gloves offer greater hand protection.
- ❖ Are the gloves properly sized for individual workers? Gloves that are too large will slide around on the hands, won't provide protection where it is needed, and could become caught in machinery or moving parts. Gloves that are too snug can decrease a worker's dexterity and may become so uncomfortable that workers will remove them. Keep in mind that men and women have different requirements relative to glove sizes and shapes.



- ❖ Will the gloves be required to offer protection from heat or cold temperatures? Insulated gloves should be selected to protect from extreme temperatures. Also, consider how long the worker will be exposed to these temperatures.
- ❖ Will the worker be wearing the gloves for a few minutes at a time or all day? Comfort is important for longer wear.

Types of Gloves

Electrical Insulating: These gloves are designed to protect qualified employees when working within the Minimum Safe Approach Distance (MSAD) of exposed energized conductors. Gloves must be tested for defects and removed from service when beyond their service life. Non-qualified workers should not attempt work within the MSAD of live circuits.

Leather: Designed for welding or for other general purposes, welder's gloves have gauntlet cuffs that cover the workers' sleeves to prevent the trapping of welding spatter.

Cut-Resistant: Depending on the level of hazard and the type of work environment, options include stainless steel mesh, Kevlar Fabric, and other materials for lighter weight cut resistance. Stainless steel mesh is often used for food contact since it can be cleaned and sanitized easily.

Chemical Resistant: These gloves are made from many different materials and include different cuffs, lengths, and thicknesses. Be sure to choose your gloves based on the chemical resistance to the substance you will be using and the job conditions. Consult the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for the chemical in use for the appropriate glove material.

Heat Resistant: Many general purpose gloves will provide heat protection, especially gloves made with a woven padding or exterior. For extensive work with hot materials or for temperature extremes as with foundry work, specialized gloves may be necessary to prevent burns.

Cold Resistant: Many types of gloves will also provide some protection against the cold, but it is important to consider the type of work. Work in a freezer is quite different from work outside. Be sure to use waterproof gloves for any job where the worker's hands can get wet. For heavy work that can damage the gloves, be sure to have extra gloves available.

For more Hand Safety resources visit—

www.worksafesask.ca/prevention/contact-crush-collision-injuries/hand-and-finger-injuries/



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How To Use This Resource

When accidents and incidents happen on the jobsite we are always quick to point the finger at lack of training, not following practices or procedures, or even improper supervision. The idea that the hazards and dangers associated with the job were not properly communicated to all of the workers, is often missed.

Tool Box Talks can go by many names and although formats may vary, these meetings all serve one purpose to - inform employees and contract workers. Tool Box Talks are short, informal, meetings between management and the workers on a jobsite. The goal of these meetings is to reinforce current safe job procedures, inform workers of new and/or relevant procedures, review recent safety violations/incidents, and ensure workers are up to date on the information required to complete their work safely.

Always use a Tool Box Talk form to record the meeting topic, date, who was in attendance and any follow up actions to be taken. Not only do these forms help with consistency of record keeping but they also ensure that nothing is missed. At the end of the meeting have management sign off on the form.



One of the most important aspects of a Tool Box Talk is giving workers an opportunity to voice their concerns and ask questions. All employees have a right to participate in health and safety as it relates to their work and it is the supervisor or manager's responsibility to create an environment for them to do so. Once the meeting is over, and the form is filled out, it should be filed with other documented Tool Box Talks. Remember that Tool Box Talks are short and informal, they are not meant to be intimidating. Use the opportunity to have fun, and stay on top of what is necessary to keep safety culture a strong part of the business.

For a full listing of Tool Box Talk topics, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/resources/tool-box-talks

For a copy of the Tool Box Talk form, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/pdf/Tool_Box_Meeting.pdf

ABOUT THE SASKATCHEWAN CONSTRUCTION SAFETY ASSOCIATION

The Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) is an industry-funded non-profit organization that provides cost-effective, accessible safety training and advice to employers and employees throughout the province. Companies that are registered with Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) and fall under the CLASS B – BUILDING CONSTRUCTION rate class are members of the SCSA. SCSA members and supporter members receive preferred pricing on classroom training year-round. The SCSA equips more than 10,000 workers each year with the education and training they need to achieve their organization's safety goals.



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