

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



September 21, 2008 *Safety Tips: Hand Tool Hazards*



A million years ago, some unknown caveman picked up a stone which had been fastened to a stick using strips of rawhide. He lifted it up experimentally, then raised it high and brought it down - - on his thumb. Since that time, people have been repeatedly hurt with tools. However, you and I don't have to join these ranks, if we adhere to a few good safety tips when we are at work with tools.

From the advent of manufacturing hand tools, they have been improved greatly with new technology. They are more effective, and in some cases, the technology has resulted in specialization of them. But even with these improvements, fractures, cuts, bruises, scrapes and punctures are still prevalent when we get careless. Even eye injuries can occur through flying metal fragments, wood or other materials. Repetitive strains are still a possibility, which result from incorrect use of tools.

Today there are effective ways to prevent hand tool injuries-by following safe practices and wearing the correct protective gear.

Following are some tips that, if practiced while using hand tools, can help you:

- **Select the right tool for the job.** Using pliers instead of a wrench or using a nail hammer to strike a chisel or punch can result in broken tools or flying particles.
- **Use tools correctly.** Never add an extension to a wrench for extra leverage. It could slip and you might receive a blow of strong significance.
- **The tools must be in good condition.** If you see defects (such as sprung jaws on wrenches, mushroom heads on punches or chisels, loose or cracked handles) turn in the tools for repair by a qualified person or replacement. Cutting tools should always be kept sharp, as dull ones require more effort and usually reduce the productiveness, as well as enhance the potential for an injury.
- **Store tools correctly.** This will prevent damage to the tools and possibly injury to a person. Don't leave tools on overhead shelves to fall or leave sharp bales exposed.
- **Wear the correct personal protective equipment.** You should use eyewear with side shields and good gloves when pounding or cutting materials.

**ALERT TODAY  
ALIVE TOMORROW!**

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*Excerpts: [www.safety-smart.com/ezone](http://www.safety-smart.com/ezone)  
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