

# Safety Matters **Manufacturing**

Provided by: SCS Agency Inc

## Your Most Valuable Tool: Your Hands

Of the many tools that we have available, our hands are the most valuable. They provide us with the dexterity necessary to perform precise maneuvers that even the most advanced technology cannot replicate. Even the simplest tasks are difficult for a person that does not have full use of his or her hands.

Hand injuries on the job are quite common, but many are preventable. There are many things you can do to keep your hands safe—here are a few of the most common.

### Make Use of Machine Guards

Never operate machinery that does not have a working guard to protect your hands. Always use a lockout device on machinery when you have to reach into it for any reason. Immediately replace guards whenever you remove them.

When guards are absent from machinery or conveyor belts, your hands, fingers and arms can easily be caught, amputated or crushed.

### Wear Gloves

Always protect your hands by wearing work gloves when handling rough materials or performing operations where you are using your hands to lift or move objects.

An Occupational Safety and Health Administration study revealed that 70 percent of workers experiencing hand injuries were not wearing gloves. The remaining 30 percent were making use of damaged, inadequate or inappropriate types of gloves for the job. Choose the right glove for the task and inspect it thoroughly before use.

## Be Cautious of Sharp Objects

Utilize the correct safety procedures when handling knives, box cutters and other sharp objects. Never attempt to pick up broken glass, nails or other sharp objects not meant for handling with bare hands; always use appropriate gloves or a broom.

### Remove Rings

No matter how much sentimental value they carry, rings put your hands in grave danger on the job. They can very easily catch on machinery and other objects, resulting in lacerations, amputations or broken bones. Always remove rings before beginning work.

### Stay Alert

Whenever you are using your hands to move an object, whether it is on a hand truck or you are carrying it, be sure the doorways and aisles in your path are wide enough for you to move through safely before you start the job. When you set a heavy object down, be aware of the placement of your hands.

### Speak Up

If you are unsure about the type of gloves you should be wearing at work, or if you have any other issue regarding hand safety on the job, talk to your supervisor.

