



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

Building Maintenance Tool Safety

Use of proper tools and equipment is essential to efficient and effective building maintenance. Here are some tips for use and care of equipment and tools:

- Keep all tools and equipment in good condition with regular maintenance. Check for damage before each job. Don't use damaged items. Recycle, dispose, or label damaged items as "Do Not Use" and turn them in for repair.
- Use the right tool or equipment for the job and according to the manufacturer's recommendations as provided in the owner's manual. For example, don't use knives or screwdrivers to open paint cans. There is a special tool to do this.
- Make sure the tool or equipment fits the user. For examples, handles on brooms and rakes may need to be longer or shorter depending on the body size.
- Make sure that you have secure footing and balance when working with equipment or tools and keep all people not involved with the work at a safe distance from the work area.
- Certain personal protective equipment (PPE) may be needed to safely work with certain types of tools or equipment (ie, hearing protection if the equipment is very loud, respirators if the equipment produces dusts or vapors, safety glasses or goggles if the equipment produces chips or sparks) Supervisors must take the responsibility to assign the appropriate PPE for the work at hand.

Specific Equipment & Tools

Ladders and Step-Stools. Make sure that ladders and step-stools are rated for the weight of the user plus tools or other items that will be taken on the ladder or step-stool. Make sure that ladders and step-stools are in good condition and are appropriate for the work to be performed. (ie, don't use metal ladders or step-stools for work on electrical fixtures).

Keep ladders and step-stools in good condition. Position them close to the work and don't extend your body or make long reaches. If you need to put a ladder or step-stool next to a door, another person needs to stand by to make sure the door is not opened. Use a tool belt while carrying tools when working on a ladder.

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Carts and Dollies. Inspect equipment carts and dollies regularly to ensure they are in good condition and roll easily. When moving a cart or dolly, use a push action whenever possible, rather than a pull action.

Be especially careful when moving carts on uneven surfaces (ie, into or out of elevators) and get help if you have difficulty. Don't overload a cart or dolly beyond its rated capacity or in a manner that blocks your view or creates a hazard for items falling.

Electrical Equipment. Carry equipment and tools properly, not by the cord. Firmly grasp the plug to disconnect electrical equipment from the power source. Never jerk or yank on the cord.

Keep cords away from heat, oil, and sharp edges. Disconnect equipment and tools from their power source when not in use before cleaning or servicing, and when changing accessories such as vacuum bags, buffing wheels, and so forth.

Sharp Tools. When working with sharp tools, stay alert. Keep sharp edges sharp. Let the tool surface do the cutting. Don't force the tool. Cut or scrape away from your body. Carry knives in a sheath. Dispose of razor blades properly in a sturdy container.



Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.