

35—Hand and Portable Power Tools

range, especially overhead vines that may catch or deflect his axe. It is advisable to wear safety shoes when using an axe.

Axe blades should be protected with a sheath or metal guard wherever possible. When the blade cannot be guarded, it is safer to carry the axe at one's side. The blade on a single-edged axe should be pointed down.

Adzes are hazardous tools in the hands of inexperienced men and should be handled only by those skilled in their use. Workmen should straddle the work or, as is necessary at times, stand at the side of the material. They should see that the adze is sharp and that the handle is sound and fitted securely in the head. Safety shoes and shin guards should be worn. When not in use, the adze should be set aside in a safe place with cutting edge covered or secured to protect passers-by or, temporarily, left stuck in the timber.

Hatchets are used for many purposes and frequently cause injury. For example, when a workman attempts to split a small piece of wood while holding it in his hands, he may cut his fingers.

To start the cut, it is a good practice to strike the wood lightly with the hatchet, then force the blade through by striking the wood against a solid block of wood.

Hatchets may not be used for striking hard metal surfaces, since the tempered head may chip or split and flying chips may injure the workman or other workers. When using a hatchet for cutting or for driving nails in a crowded area, workmen should take special care to prevent injury to themselves and other workers.

Using a hatchet to drive nails is a poor practice. If used, however, the face of a hatchet used for driving nails should be ground square if it becomes rounded. Some companies prefer to use a corrugated face to prevent nails from flying.

Miscellaneous cutting tools

Planes, scrapers, bits, and drawknives should be used only by experienced men. These tools should be kept sharp and in good condition. When not in use, they should be placed in a rack on the bench, or in a tool

box in such a way that will protect the user and prevent damage to the cutting edge.

Knives are more frequently the source of disabling injuries than any other hand tool. In the meatpacking industry, hand knives caused more than 15 percent of all disabling injuries, which is more than caused by any other agency.

The principal hazard in the use of knives is that the hands may slip from the handle onto the blade or that the knife may strike the body or the free hand. A handle guard or a finger ring (and swivel) on the handle eliminates these hazards. Adequate guarding is important.

The cutting stroke should be away from the body. If that is not possible, then the hands and body should be in the clear, a heavy leather apron or other protective clothing should be worn, and, where possible, a rack or holder should be used for the material to be cut. Jerky motions should be avoided to help maintain balance. Be sure employees are trained and supervised.

Belt repairmen and other workmen who must carry knives with them on the job should keep them in sheaths or holders. Never carry a sheathed knife on the front part of a belt—always carry it over the right or left hip, toward the back. This will prevent severing a leg artery or vein in case of a fall.

Knives should never be left lying on benches or in other places where they may cause hand injuries. When not in use, they should be kept in racks with the edges guarded. Safe placing and storing of knives is important to knife safety. (See Fig 35-10.)

Ring knives—small, hooked knives attached to a finger ring—are used where string or twine must be cut frequently. Supervisors should make sure that the cutting edge is kept outside the hand, not pointed inside. A wall-mounted cutter or blunt-nose scissors would be safer.

Carton cutters are safer than hooked or pocket knives for opening cartons. They not only protect the user, but eliminate deep cuts that could damage carton contents. Frequently, damage to contents of soft plastic bottles may not be detected immediately, subsequent leakage may cause chemical burns, damage other products, or start a fire.