

SAFETY MEETING

Note: Our company conducts scheduled safety meetings to focus attention on one major safety topic per meeting. Should an employee have a question on any subject related to safety or job procedure, it will be addressed by the person conducting the meeting.

HAND PROTECTION

Hold your hand up and take a good look at it. Grasp and release and move your fingers around. Do you realize that your hand is composed of 20 muscles, three (3) major nerves, 27 bones (14 of which are in your fingers) plus skin, fatty tissue, tendons, and joints. Additionally, there are 15 muscles in your forearm which provide power to your hand. Your hand is your gateway to the world. It lets you do what you think. Its function is feeling and grasping.

How many times have we heard: "What separates man from the rest of the animal kingdom is a truly functional opposing thumb."? Try to pick up something while holding your thumb still. In fact, if the nerve to the small muscles of the thumb is severed, 80% of the total hand function is lost.

Another thing that separates man from the rest of the animal kingdom is his ability to design and use hand protection. There are numerous types of hand protection (gloves) available -- each with a specific purpose. The most common are general purpose cotton work gloves which provide protection from minor skin abrasions and cold. However, there are many other types of gloves. Hands need protection from chemicals, cuts, heat, cold, germs, radiation, impact, electricity, and other dangers in on the job site. Part of hazard assessment is determining what types of personal protective equipment (hand protection) is required on the job site. For each type of hazard applicable to the hand, there is an appropriate glove which will provide protection and, at the same time, allow you to accomplish your job with efficiency as well as safety.

Personal hygiene is a part of hand protection. Long fingernails can present a real, and possibly painful, problem on the job site. Allowing a hangnail to go unattended can lead to infection.

Fingers are susceptible to frostbite. Frostbite can cause cellular damage as the water in the cells freezes and the ice crystals damage the cell. Warm gloves can make your work more enjoyable and much more efficient during cold weather operations.

Safe work practices and following company safety procedures goes a long way toward hand protection.

Do not take chances with your hands. If you think you need some sort of hand protection, you probably do.