

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Cell Phone Use

General - Personal communication devices (cellular phones) are used extensively for daily work activities. Use of these devices while driving contributes to motor vehicle incidents as it distracts the driver.

1. If an employee needs to make a phone call while driving a company vehicle it must be done by using blue tooth devices. If a blue tooth device is not available, the employee is to pull over and stop when safe to do so to make their phone call.
2. Do not engage in emotional conversations using hands free options while operating a motor vehicle.
3. Never text and drive or use handheld devices while driving.

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Circular Saws

General This type of power tool is one of the most used in residential construction. Because of this common use there are numerous incidents that could occur. The following are the minimum accepted practices to be used with this piece of equipment.

1. Prior to use, check that the retractable guard is operating properly to prevent the blade from being exposed when not in use.
2. CSA approved safety equipment such as safety glasses or a face shield, hearing protection and hand protection must be worn.
3. Review the safety data sheets for the product before cutting. Where harmful vapours or dusts are created, approved breathing protection will be used.
4. The proper sharp blade is designed for the work to be selected and used. Use of the proper blade for ripping or crosscutting of material will prevent failure of the blade.
5. The power supply needs to be disconnected before making any adjustments to the saw or changing the blade. This will eliminate the possibility of the worker inadvertently starting the saw and injuring themselves.
6. Before the saw is set down be sure the retractable guard has fully returned to its down position. This will protect a worker from injury if the saw blade contacts a surface and kicks back.
7. Both hands to be used to hold the saw during use, this will reduce the possibility of the saw kicking back and injuring the worker.
8. Maintenance shall be done per the manufacturer's specifications.
9. Ensure all cords are clear of the cutting area before starting to cut. Cords that have cut or cracked outer casings can result in an electrical shock to the worker.
10. Before cutting, check the stock for foreign objects or any other obstruction which could cause the saw to "kick back".
11. When ripping, make sure the material is held securely in place. Use a wedge to keep the material from closing and causing the saw to bind.
12. Inspect the power cord prior to use to ensure that there are no breaks. This will prevent the possibility of electrical shock.
13. All manufacture furnished safety switches are to remain in place and are to be checked for proper operation prior to use.
14. Ensure blade depth is set appropriately for material to be cut.

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Compressed Air

General - Air powered tools in construction range from staple guns to jack hammers.

1. Compressed air will not be used to blow debris or to clear dirt from any worker's clothing or skin.
2. Ensure that the air pressure has been turned off and the line pressure relieved before disconnecting the hose or changing tools.
3. All hose connectors shall be the quick disconnect pressure release type with a "safety chain/cable".
4. Wear personal protective equipment such as eye protection and face shields and ensure other workers in the area are made aware of or have restricted access to the hazard.
5. Hoses are to be checked on a regular basis for cuts, bulges, or other damage. Ensure that defective hoses are repaired or replaced immediately.
6. A proper pressure regulator and relief device shall be in the system to ensure that correct operating pressures are maintained.
7. The correct air hoses to be used for the tool/equipment being used.
8. The equipment must be properly maintained per the manufacturer's requirements.
9. Follow manufacturer's general instructions and comply with legislated safety requirements.

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Concrete Foundations

General – Foundations are the first stage of house construction and are literally the “foundation” of any structure.

1. Concrete foundations are structural members and will be completed per approved specifications.
2. Ensure rebar protection is in place (end caps) for any rebar protruding from the ground or concrete work.
3. Ensure excavation is of proper design with appropriate cutbacks, access ramps (at front and back of the excavation) and spoil piles are placed 1m back from edge of excavation.
4. Ensure you are conversant with concrete pour.
5. Ensure you are in concrete pump operator's sight.
6. Ensure all equipment is in good working order.
7. When working with concrete pumping trucks all personnel need to stay away from the area under the boom.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Defective Tools

General - Defective tools can cause serious and painful injuries. If a tool is defective in any way, **DO NOT USE IT** and follow the lock out tag out procedure. Inspect all tools prior to use.

Be aware of problems like:

1. Chisels and wedges with mushroomed heads.
2. Split or cracked handles.
3. Chipped or broken drill bits.
4. Wrenches with worn out jaws.
5. Tools which are not complete such as files without handles.

Watch for problems like:

1. Broken or inoperative guards.
2. Insufficient or improper grounding due to damage to double insulated tools.
3. No ground wire (on plug) or cords of standard tools.
4. The on/off switch is not in good working order.
5. The tool blade is cracked.
6. The wrong grinder wheel is being used.

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Electric Power Tools

General - All power tools are to be CSA approved. Power tools must be three-prong grounded or double insulated.

1. When using power tools read and follow manufacturers' instructions.
2. Cutting or abrasive attachments such as blades, disks or bits shall be the proper size and rating for the power tool used.
3. Never force or put pressure on power tools; let the tool do the work. Applying too much pressure may cause the blade, disk, or bit to fail.
4. Always disconnect the tool from the power source when adjusting, changing attachments, or replacing blades. This will eliminate the possibility of inadvertently starting the power tool and injuring the worker.
5. Trigger locking devices shall be removed from all power tools.
6. Guards are to be used on all equipment as directed by the manufacturer. Guards and other safety devices are not to be modified, tampered with, or removed.
7. Power tools are not to be hoisted or handled by the cord. Power tools are to be removed from receptacles by removing the plug, not pulling on the cord.
8. When using power tools always wear eye protection appropriate for the job. Use of power tools that may produce flying particles, such as grinding, require eye protection or a face shield.
9. Power tools must be held firmly, and material must be properly secured before turning on the power tool and starting work. Always use handles provided to help control the power tool and avoid twisting.
10. Use push sticks when using table saws, jointers, or other tools with exposed blades to prevent the possibility of hand contact with cutting attachments.
11. Never wear loose clothing or dangling jewelry when using power tools.
12. Pipe or conduit threading machines and drill presses must be equipped with a foot pedal for on/off controls. In the event clothes or other material get caught in the equipment switches may not be reachable.
13. Ensure defective tools are repaired or replaced using the proper lock out/tag out procedure for all defective equipment.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Entry & Exit

General – Access/Egress is a legislative and bylaw mandate and must be provided to visitors, trades and employees.

1. Entrances with a vertical rise or drop greater than one foot need a ramp or step to provide access. RPL lots with no front availability or access for emergency vehicles, rear access may be installed as an alternative.
2. If a step is used, it should be constructed in such a way that it can bear the weight of several workers carrying any equipment, tools, and materials necessary to construct a new home.
3. All stairs or ramps need handrails installed.
4. Stair treads shall be level front to back and side to side.
5. Metal ramps and front access will be installed once framing is completed. (Alberta Only)
6. Floor joist material (TJI) shall not be used for ramps.
7. Do not use any material that is not sound (large knots or split).
8. Ramp slope will not exceed 3 horizontal to 1 vertical (3:1).

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Power Operated Hand Tools

General – All power operated hand tools must be CSA approved and operated by a trained employee.

1. All power operated hand tools shall be operated and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' specifications. It is critical that information specific to each manufacturer is known as the strength of power loads, color coding, and fastening devices are not standardized or interchangeable.
2. Manufacturers' recommendations cover the type of color-coded cartridge for certain materials and applications. As these recommendations cannot cover every material or application, testing may be required. The general rule is to start with the weakest cartridge and increase one load number at a time to reach the required penetration.
3. Power operated hand tools are designed so that two separate actions are required before it will fire (i.e. pressure against the surface of the material and action of the trigger).
4. Power operated hand tools should never be pointed at anyone whether loaded or unloaded. Hands shall always be kept free of the muzzle end.
5. Power operated hand tools to be held firmly and at right angles to the surface being driven into. Fastening devices shall be kept in from the edge of the material being anchored to the minimum distance recommended by the manufacturer.
6. Power operated hand tools need to be kept in a locked container when not in use or when left unattended.
7. Power operated hand tools should only be loaded when required for immediate use. Tools shall not be left loaded when stored or unattended.
8. Wear hearing and eye protection when using this tool.
9. In the event of a misfire:
 - Hold the tool against the material for at least 30 seconds in case firing is delayed.
 - Remove the cartridge from the tool, keeping the tool away from the body, preferably pointed towards material such as wood.
 - Place the cartridge in a container of water or oil.

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Fall Protection

General - Fall protection will be utilized where there is or may be a danger to workers falling. No one should use fall protection equipment or material until they have received adequate training. All certification for workers that have received training needs to be available on site when requested by any company representative or government regulatory agency.

1. Be competent with all components of fall protection system.
2. Ensure you know capabilities of fall protection equipment.
3. Ensure barricades, ribbons and signs identify restricted areas.
4. Ensure you understand the procedures for rescue of workers who may be unable to rescue themselves from an elevated work area.
5. 2nd floor window openings under 36" must have bracing installed.
6. Guardrails must be installed after 2nd floor rim joists are installed prior to 2nd floor sheathing.
7. Ensure you know your anchor points. Installation of a continuous 2" x 6" along the top of the web chord or king post with 3 – 3 1/4" common nails at each truss shall be done for the installation of anchor slings. Anchor slings will then be secured around the 2" x 6" and the top chord of the truss per the manufacturers' instructions. Install 2-2" Ardox nails on the sling where the strap passes through the loop of the anchor sling.
8. Ensure you do not wrap the lanyards and/or lifelines around beams, girders, pipes, etc.
9. Utilize the buddy system and continually check each other's harness and D ring to ensure that the harness is not too loose and or the D ring has not slipped down the back.
10. Ensure a fall protection plan has been devised and is readily available on site to review.
11. Fall protection certification end user is required for the person working at heights or to ensure the employee has been adequately trained. Online certification will not be accepted for training.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Fire Extinguishers

General

1. Ensure you are trained in the operation of fire extinguishers
2. Check cylinder
3. Inspect cartridge puncture cap.
4. Check hose and nozzle for obstruction
5. Check date of manufacture
6. Check level and condition of powder – yellow needle should be in the green not the red
7. Monthly inspections are required via Pronto Forms
8. Recertification of fire extinguishers is completed annually organized by the safety department

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Floor Openings

General - Regulations require that workers be protected from falling through a floor opening by a temporary covering or railing.

1. Install a temporary secure covering to withstand the combined maximum weight of the worker, equipment and material expected to be placed on the cover at any one time.
2. The use of O.S.B. sheathing as the cover without the use of dimensioned lumber for support is not allowed.
3. Install a temporary railing around the opening.
4. If the temporary guard rail or covering is removed an alternative must be provided immediately
5. Do not lean over an opening to perform a task.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Hand Tools

General

1. Hand tools need to be carried in tool pouches or tool bags. Tools such as knives, chisels or screwdrivers should not be carried in pockets as a fall onto these tools may cause a serious puncture or wound.
2. Cutting tools should always be kept sharp. Care must be taken to work cutting tools away from the body, not towards it. Hands shall be kept behind the tools not in front of them.
3. Knives should have retractable blades whenever possible. Large, fixed blade knives used for cutting insulation shall be equipped with a wrist strap to reduce the chances of it being dropped.
4. Prior to use, hand tools should be inspected for damage. If damaged the tool should be removed from service and repaired.
5. Ends of metal striking tools such as chisels that are mushroomed shall be dressed to prevent fragments from flying off when struck and causing injury.
6. Wrenches are not to be used with “snipes” or metal tubing over the end to increase leverage. Hammer wrenches, pneumatic impacts or nut splitters should be used if unable to free stuck nuts.
7. Gloves & eye protection should be worn when using any hand tools.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Housekeeping

General - Good housekeeping is the key to a safe and productive project and shall always be maintained.

1. Garbage bins/bags are provided at each site for your use.
2. Keep stairways, access ways and ladders clear of material.
3. Clean up work areas as work progresses.
4. Do not throw garbage or materials from elevations. Lower in containers or install chutes to containers below.
5. When stripping forms or other materials with nails, the nails shall be bent or pulled by the worker stripping and not left for someone else.
6. Ensure materials are well secured especially at elevations to avoid movement during windy conditions.
7. Areas in proximity to emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, hoses and emergency PPE shall always be kept clear of debris and materials.
8. Hoses, cables, and cords shall be placed in an orderly manner to avoid tripping hazards. Where practical, all hoses, cords and cables shall be suspended above areas where they may be exposed to damage.
9. Potential hazards should be controlled and reported immediately.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Ladders (General)

General – All ladders used on site to be Grade 1 (250 lb. capacity) or Grade 1A (300 lb. capacity)

1. Ladders need to be inspected prior to each use. Damaged ladders need to be taken out of service
2. Fiberglass ladders, which are not good conductors, shall be used for work in proximity to energized electrical equipment. Wooden ladders are not recommended as they are usually reinforced with wire on the rails and can be conductive when wet. Aluminum ladders shall not be used in proximity to energize electrical equipment
3. All extension ladders shall be tied off at the top. Another worker shall hold ladder until tie-off is complete
4. Anyone working on extension ladders more than 3 meters (10 feet) in elevation shall wear full body harnesses tied to a substantial structure other than the ladder. When working on a ladder the body shall not be extended in a manner that allows the belt buckle to pass beyond the rails. **NOTE: Ladders are not a substitute for safe work platforms. The primary purpose of ladders is for access/egress**
5. Ladders need to be placed on a solid base
6. Ladders need to extend a minimum of 1 meter (3 feet) above the top of a platform or landing
7. Always maintain a 3-point contact and face the ladder when climbing up or down. Do not carry tools or materials in your hands when climbing a ladder. Use a rope or a canvas bucket for hoisting/lowering tools or materials
8. Do not stand on the top two rungs of any step ladder. On a step ladder the cap is not considered a rung
9. Ladders shall not be placed near doorways, roadways, or equipment access routes, unless the door or access route is made temporarily inoperative, and signs are posted. Materials shall not be placed in proximity to the base or landing of any ladder.
10. Keep boots clean of mud, grease or other slippery materials that could cause loss of footing.
11. Extension ladder to be set up with a ratio of 1 Horizontal to 4 Vertical (i.e. 3 feet out at base for a 12-foot rise).
12. Do not climb higher than the fourth rung from the top of any extension ladder.
13. Do not overextend the extension ladder. Maintain the minimum overlap at sections as indicated on the ladder label.
14. Have a second person hold the ladder while securing the top of the extension ladder.
15. Raise and lower all extension ladders from the ground and ensure that the ladder locks are engaged.
16. Do not use any ladder if you have a physical condition that will cause you to lose your balance or are using medication that will cause dizziness, vertigo, or tire easily.

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Manual Lifting and Carrying

General - Most lifting incidents are due to improper lifting methods. All manual lifting should be planned, and safe lifting procedures followed.

1. Ensure that you know your physical limitations and the approximate weight of materials. Obtain assistance in lifting heavy objects.
2. The use of power equipment or mechanical lifting devices should be considered and employed where practical.
3. When in doubt of the weight of an item use a dolly or trolley etc.
4. Ensure a good grip before lifting and employ proper lifting technique.
5. Avoid reaching out.
6. Pipes, conduit, rebar, and other conductive materials should not be carried on the shoulder near exposed live electrical equipment or conductors.
7. Be aware of hazardous and unsafe conditions (i.e. snow, ice, mud, materials, etc.).
8. When handling material or equipment that can cause finger or hand injuries use gloves.
9. Whenever possible push or pull rather than lift.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Mold Spray

General - Refer to safety data sheets for PPE required for use of this controlled product.

1. Ensure that all other personnel are aware of the spraying operations and the PPE required.
2. Ensure that there is no spillage when pouring liquid into the sprayer. If liquid is spilled, soak it up and dispose of per SDS instructions.
3. Ensure that the walking surfaces are clear of all materials or debris.
4. Use proper lifting technique when lifting the sprayer or liquid canisters.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Motor Vehicle Operation

General

1. Defensive driving is key when operating any vehicle
2. Back in to parking spots when practical
3. Operation of any motor vehicle for the purposes of company business is prohibited when the driver is fatigued, has consumed alcoholic or drugs causing impairment, or when the road authority does not recommend travel
4. Seatbelts are always required
5. Cell phones can only be used with a hands-free device or if the vehicle is pulled over and in park
6. Any incidents that occur related to fleet vehicles must be reported immediately to the safety department

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Office

General

1. Ensure you are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure and location of the muster point.
2. Ensure that all electrical cords are in good condition and are not overloaded.
3. Ensure that computer monitors and chairs are adjusted to correct height.
4. Ensure fans/space heaters are used to manufacturer specifications and equipped with a tip over switch that turns the heater off if this occurs.
5. Filing cabinet drawers are closed when not in use.
6. Ensure you are aware of the fire extinguisher locations.
7. Ensure you are aware of the first aiders within the building.
8. When transporting materials of a heavy nature use handcarts and trolleys.
9. Ensure main traffic areas are free and clear of obstruction (i.e. bags, boxes, misc. items, etc.).

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Pressure Washer

General - When using this product, the following precautions should be followed:

1. The proper personal protective equipment to be worn as set out by the manufacturer and the safe job procedures.
2. Fire hazard: Do not add fuel while the engine is running. Do not operate if fuel has been spilled, move the machine to another location.
3. This machine has hot surfaces which can cause burns. Operate the unit in a safe environment away from children.
4. Do not allow the high-pressure hose to contact the muffler guard.
5. Do not leave the machine running unattended.
6. Stay alert and watch what you are doing.
7. Do not stand on unstable surfaces.
8. Do not tip the machine on its side.
9. The gun safety lock prevents the trigger from accidentally being engaged. This safety feature does not lock trigger in the on position.
10. Do not spray electrical connections, outlets, or fixtures.
11. Do not operate in an enclosed space as exhaust fumes are dangerous.
12. Do not use hot water.
13. Operate and fuel machine in a well-ventilated area.
14. High pressure jets can be dangerous if subject to misuse. The jet must not be directed at persons, animals, electrical devices, or at the machine itself.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Propane

General - Since propane is heavier than air and invisible, it is a special concern when it is used on the job site. All installations and use of this product on the jobsite must comply with Government Legislation set out for its safe use.

1. “Lifting lugs” provided on tanks are not to be used. Slings are to be wrapped around the shell of the tank.
2. Tank valves shall be closed, and regulators shall be removed from the tank prior to any movement of the tank.
3. Crane hooks must be equipped with a “safety latch”.
4. All trucks, cranes or equipment used to handle propane tanks must be equipped with a fire extinguisher appropriate for the size and type of tank being handled.
5. Except in an emergency, any movement or repositioning of tanks shall be performed by a competent worker.
6. When in use, propane bottles are to be securely held in an upright position. Specifically, the 100 lb propane tanks shall be secured to prevent the possibility of the tank falling over. If there are 3 or more 100 lb tanks, strap the tanks together with web type tie down to ensure that they will be secure.
7. Tanks are not to be hooked up and used without proper regulators and should only be done so by a qualified trained technician.
8. All tanks are to be left outside the home being constructed a minimum of 3m (10 feet) from the home or any adjacent structure.
9. All tanks must be placed on a flat surface using MDF or plywood type material.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Slips, Trips & Falls

General -To reduce the number of slips, trips and falls on the work site, make sure to implement safe workspaces or methods.

1. Wear appropriate footwear.
2. Ensure ice & snow are removed from the areas in which you need to walk.
3. Walking surfaces should be suitable for the pushing, pulling, and carrying tasks performed on them to reduce the possibility of injury.
4. Keep walking and working surfaces clear of material and tools.
5. Install railings, cover stairwells, use travel restraint or fall arrest systems where necessary to prevent falls.
6. Ensure you have proper access to the area you need to enter in terms of ramp, stairs etc.
7. Please report any slip, trip or fall injuries regardless of the severity.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Spray Painting

General - Ensure that safety data sheets are available and referred to prior to commencing work. This will identify any PPE required by workers and explosion or toxic hazards.

1. Ensure the worker is competent & trained in all aspects of the work required of them.
2. Follow manufacturers' recommendations
3. Ensure all sources of ignition are eliminated and all equipment is grounded. This will reduce the possibility of accidental ignition of flammable vapours.
4. Ensure area is well ventilated
5. Promptly clean up any spills or drips of paint to prevent them from becoming slip hazards.
6. Take precautions to prevent fires when spray painting, such as avoiding ignition sources, using non-sparking tools, and ensuring that spray painting equipment is properly grounded. Have fire extinguishers readily available in case of emergencies.

Safe Work Practices

Excavation & Trenching

General - Protecting Workers from injuries associated with excavating and trenching

1. No worker shall enter any trench or excavation until the walls have been adequately cut back or temporary protective structures have been installed unless the trench or excavation is shallower than the legal minimums and the soil is stable.
2. Hazard assessment and inspection of all machinery to be done prior to any work being started.
3. Prior to commencement of any excavation ensure that all underground and/or overhead lines have been identified, exposed, and well marked/flagged.
4. Provide ladders in immediate area for access/egress of trenches and excavations. Where Applicable the excavator will step the shoring for easy access for workers to enter excavation.
5. Set up barricades or fencing when and where required. Please ensure neighbouring homes are contacted in advance if encroachment is going to be needed.
6. Where the cut back method is not possible, provide timber shoring, trench jacks, sheet piling, cage, or other approved method.
7. Ensure workers are trained in trenching and excavation procedures, policies, and current provincial legislation.