



Safety Talk #125

Portable Electronic Tools

“It’s only 110-it can’t hurt me.”

There are many accident reports that show that a 110-volt shock can be fatal. It’s not the voltage that will get you; it’s the amperage or current.

As most everyone knows, working with electricity in wet conditions is dangerous because water is an excellent conductor of electricity.

Electric tools should not be used in the rain or allowed to become wet by being splashed or dropped into water.

Remind everyone to check the casing on their double insulated tools, if that is what they use, since any crack in the case can cause a shock.

If someone is using a tool and feels a tingle, tell them to have it checked out. This could be their only warning!

Tell the crew to check their own power tools for obvious defects.

- Is the cord cracked or frayed?
- Can you see individual wires, especially where the cord connects to the tool?
- Has the case cracked or is it bent from abuse?
- Does the tool smell or smoke when used? Does it get too hot to hold?
- Is the extension cord three wired and is the third prong in place?

If they are not satisfied with its appearance or operation, they should turn it back in for repairs. Warn them not to try to repair it themselves!

Remind them that if extension cords are used on site, they must be rated for heavy or extra heavy-duty service, the cord should also be protected from mechanical damage.

Try This for Show and Tell

Try to find some power tools that need to either be thrown out or repaired. Ask the crew to take a look at them and tell you why they should not be used anymore.

Find a tool or extension cord with the third prong removed. If you can’t find one on your job, tell them that you looked and they are better than most sites.



Questions You Can Use to Get Them Thinking

- Do any tools have a frayed cord where it connects to the tool?
- How many of you have been injured with a power tool? What happened?
- Could an extension cord be cut in a door or opening?
- Do all cords have a third prong?



Date

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