Toolbox Safety Series

WRENCH SAFETY

There are a lot of ways you can skin your knuckles. By using the wrong wrench for the job ranks as one of the most painful ways. If it has happened to you, or if you know someone it happened to, you know just how painful it is.

There are several important safety rules to follow when using a wrench. Selecting the right wrench for the job is priority one. To choose the right wrench, consider the type of job that has to be done. The location and number of nuts and bolts will determine the type of wrench to use to do the most efficient job. The size of the nut or bolthead will determine the size of wrench. Don't use a wrench that's too big.

Whether you're using an adjustable wrench or a fixed-jaw wrench, there are general safety points which should be followed. These points apply to both types of tools. The first is don't use the wrench as a hammer. Hammering with a wrench is dangerous and may set up a hazardous condition for someone else later on because of undetected damage to the tool.

Never use a damaged wrench. Use only wrenches that are in top condition. If they are worn or defective, take them out of service. Keep a wrench in good condition by keeping it in its proper place on a rack, or in a tool box, when not being used. This will keep it from becoming damaged by other tools or becoming a hazard on the floor. For long term storage, keep wrenches in a dry place coated with a rust-preventive. When removed from storage, clean it with a solvent.

After choosing the right wrench, get a good solid footing before applying the tool. This will help you keep your balance if the wrench slips or a bolt breaks. Make sure the wrench seats squarely and fits snugly around the nut or bolt. This is necessary when pulling hard on the wrench. Experienced workers develop a "feel" for a wrench. Train yourself to develop this skill.

Adjustable wrenches are not made for hard service, so set the adjusting knurl so the wrench fits the nut snugly. Grip the nut or bolt so that the pulling force is applied to the stationary jaw section. Pulling the wrench is recommended over pushing it.

Set a pipe wrench so the teeth will grip the round object with the center of the jaws.

Statistics show why we should be concerned about safe use of wrenches. Hand tools, such as wrenches, account for about eight percent of all compensable injuries. The fact that these injuries include such things as loss of eyes, broken bones, and puncture wounds should support the safety points we've been talking about. Remember, use the right wrench for the job, and never use a tool that is defective.

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LEADER NOTES

Objective: To demonstrate proper use of wrenches and wrench conditions.

Potential Injuries: Loss of eyes, broken bones, cuts, and puncture wounds.

THE TALK - POINTS TO COVER

- There are a lot of ways you can skin your knuckles, but using the wrong wrench for the job ranks as one of the most painful means.
- Several important safety rules to follow when you use a wrench.
    - Selection of the right wrench for the job.
    - Size, location and number of nuts and bolts should determine the type of wrench to use.
    - Don't use a wrench that's too big.
    - Do not use a wrench as a hammer.
    - Never use a damaged wrench.
    - Use only wrenches that are in top condition. Worn or defective ones should be taken out of service.
    - Keep a wrench in good condition by proper storage on a rack or in a tool box when not being used.
    - Get a good solid footing before applying the tool. This will help you keep your balance should the wrench slip or bolt break.
    - Make sure the wrench seats squarely and fits snugly around the nut or bolt.
    - Set the adjusting knurl so the wrench fits the nut snugly, grip the nut or bolt so that the pulling force is applied to the stationary jaws section, and pull the wrench.
- Hand tools such as wrenches account for about eight percent of all compensable injuries.
- Remember, use the right wrench for the job, and never use a tool that is defective.

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WRENCH SAFETY

Location:_____

Date:_____ Time:_____

Number of employees:_____ Number attending:_____

Record of those attending:

Name: (please print)	Signature:

Other safety issues or suggestions made by employees:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Manager's remarks:_____

_____

Manager:_____ **Supervisor:**_____

(Signature) **(Signature)**