Transcript

Safe Use of Power Tools

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[*Opening visual of slide text saying ‘Brought to you by Safe Work Australia Virtual Seminar Series’, seminars.swa.gov.au, ‘#virtualWHS’*]

**Narrator:**

Using power tools is a common cause of injuries across industry, and we as roof tilers have to live with and manage this risk daily.

Here are some key things to remember and apply when using any type of power tool, regardless of how it’s powered, so that we all get to go home in one piece every day.

Step one, pre-job assessment. As they say, preparation and pre-starts prevent pretty poor performance, so a key part of starting any job, large or small, is to go through a thorough pre-start process.

As part of the pre-start, check in with your supervisor and make sure your crew are qualified, trained and competent in the use of the power tools they will be working with that day. Consider using non-power tool alternatives that reduce risks and can make your job easier, quicker and safer.

Step 2, visual inspection and testing. Before using any power tool, including nail guns, always do a visual check of the equipment to make sure it’s in good working order. Check things like guards on blades and safety mechanisms to make sure they are secure and working properly. If you’re not sure, check the manufacturer’s operation and maintenance information or check with your supervisor. If you feel the power tool is unsafe, do not use the equipment and let someone know.

Where you are using 240 volt power tools, it’s vital to make sure the leads are not damaged. They need to be tagged and in date. But remember just because they’re tagged and in date does not guarantee they’re safe to use.

Standard extension leads should be less than 25 metres long and always lifted off the ground and away from metal structures to prevent accidental electrocution.

Make sure a residual current device, or RCD, is used between the 240 volt power tool you’re using and the power source, and that it’s also tagged and in date. It’s important to test the RCD each time before you use it. This quick test can save you from a harmful electric shock.

When you’re using battery powered, petrol or air powered tools, the key thing to look for is that the safety mechanisms on the units are working properly. Also check to see that all connections are secure and nothing is leaking from the unit.

Step 3, basics that apply to all power tool use. With the work we do in the roof tiling industry, we get to use many different types of power tools, but the principles to using them safely don’t change. These are remember to keep your hands and feet away from any moving parts. Keep people a safe distance away from you when you are using them, being especially careful to watch out for people below you when you are working. And when you are using them on the roof, always make sure you stand securely and are well balanced.

Finally, remember to wear the right personal protective equipment, or PPE for your job, and make sure anyone who can be affected by the work you are doing with a power tool is also wearing the right PPE so they are protected too.

If at any time you are not sure how to use any type of power tool safely, check out the operating instructions or ask someone. This simple step could save you from being injured or killed.

By remembering and following these key steps when using any power tools, we can all go home safe every day.

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[*Text: ‘Workers are qualified and competent’, ‘Equipment is safe for use’, ‘Set up your site for safe work’, ‘PPE’, ‘Refer to the operating manual or ask your supervisor’*]

Think smart before you start. Keep safety in mind. It will save your behind.

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