



PORTABLE ELECTRIC TOOLS

International Masonry Institute

The James Brice House
42 East Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
phone 410.280.1305
fax 301.261.2855
toll free 800.803.0295
www.imiweb.org

Masonry Hotline

800.IMI.0988 (800.464.0988)
masonryquestions@imiweb.org

Training Hotline

800.JOBS.IMI (800.562.7464)
training@imiweb.org

The use of portable electric power tools is one of the most common occurrences on a construction project. Many people in construction take for granted the safety aspects of the power tools that they routinely use, and don't inspect their equipment, don't consider the hazards in their surroundings, or don't fully appreciate the lethal power of electricity. According to OSHA, a leading cause of death and injury in the workplace is electric shock.

Always report the following situations to the job site's designated competent person:

- Defective, frayed, or broken cords or cords with exposed wires.
- Bad connections to power terminals.
- Defective or broken plugs.
- Defective or loose switches.
- Brushes causing sparks.

Safe usage guideline:

- Use only equipment that is in good condition.
- Be sure the tool is properly grounded.
- Never overstrain the tool thus overloading the motor.
- Never use an un-insulated tool without a grounding plug.
- If working in damp locations, inspect electric cords and equipment to ensure that they are in good condition and free of defects, and use a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- Never use a tool in the presence of flammable vapors or gases.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead wires.
- Never repair electrical cords or equipment unless you are qualified and authorized to do so.
- Never route extension cords through windows, doors, or walls without first protecting them from abrasion.
- Do not route cords through standing water or puddles.
- Do not route electrical cords across aisles which can create a tripping hazard.
- Turning off a switch does not always turn off all electricity!
- Lockout/Tagout must be performed by a qualified person.
- Only use a C-rated fire extinguisher to put out an electrical fire.
- Remember, electricity always seeks a path of least resistance and often that is through a defective cord into the worker's body.

Additional Discussion Notes:

- Extension cords are for temporary use only. Unplug and put it away at the end of the job or at the end of the shift (whichever comes first).
- Discuss company policy on tagging defective tools and removing them from service.
- Identify a qualified person to repair all portable electric tools/equipment.
- Discuss the company's policy on inspection, removal from service, and re-inspection to be allowed back into service employee owned portable electrical tools and equipment.

NOTE: Employees must be adequately trained in the proper use, inspection, and policies involving the need to remove from service any electrical power tool and/or related equipment that they will be using on the job site.