

LOSS CONTROL

Newsletter



Utility Knife Safety - *They can cut you to the bone...in an instant.*

If there is a single tool that demands total respect in the workplace, it is the utility knife. This seemingly simple tool is used to cut all types of packaging (straps, shrink wrap, boxes, etc.) as well as small components such as hoses and wires. One wrong or inadvertent move can result in serious physical harm.

Forty percent (40%) of all injuries attributed to manual workshop tools involve knives, and primarily those with retractable blades. Utility knife injuries occur for the following reasons:

- Drawing the knife towards you instead of away from your body.
- Using the body as a backstop cutting surface.
- Applying excess pressure to the blade.
- Using a dull blade. Dull blades require more pressure, increasing the potential for injury.
- Failing to wear personal protective equipment such as gloves or eyewear.
- Failing to inspect the knife before use.
- Trying to cut more than the knife is designed to handle.
- Improperly storing the knife, i.e., with the blade extended.

Other common and overlooked situations causing injuries:

- Using an improperly sized blade in the utility knife.
- The blade tip did not completely retract into the handle.
- Using a utility knife to pry loose objects.
- Defective parts or retraction mechanisms. If any part of the knife is broken or defective, toss it. The cost of a new knife is miniscule in comparison to injury costs.

Always cut away from your body. While this seems like common sense, this is perhaps the most commonly ignored rule. For example, when opening a large box, a common practice is to reach across the box and pull the knife toward you. This is also the easiest way to cut yourself. Instead, kneel in front of the box, place your hand on top of the box to firmly hold it down, and then draw the knife away from yourself and across the box. Assuming a sharp blade, this method works just as well as pulling the knife towards you but without the threat of cutting yourself.



Another problem arises when employees don't have immediate access to a utility knife supplied by the dealership. The tendency is then to use whatever is handy. This can quickly turn into a hazardous situation if the knife used is not fit for the task or is improperly used.

Safety always comes first!

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or for additional loss control information, please contact Mark Valentine at 816-698-4611 or mark.valentine@aon.com.

Utility Knife Safety Cont.

Follow these safety precautions when using utility knives:

- **Cut against a solid surface, i.e., not your body.** Never hold an object in your lap, in your hand, or against any part of your body to make a cut. Keep your body extremities out of the cutting path.
- **Do not startle anyone** using a knife.
- **Never** use a knife for any purpose other than cutting. A knife blade is not a screwdriver, pry bar, or can opener.
- **Wear safety eyeglasses** to protect your eyes in case a blade breaks.
- **Use hand and arm protection** if your job requires a lot of fast work with a blade. Cut resistant gloves (at least Level 3) are available for this purpose.
- **Retract the blade** when not actually making a cut.
- **Do not store** an exposed blade in a pocket, tool belt, or any place someone might reach into blindly.
- **Only extend the blade** as far as needed to cut through the box. Overextending the blade will increase the risk of cutting the box contents or breaking off the blade.
- **Replace older knives** with the newer self-retracting blade knives. This technology has significantly decreased the frequency of injuries.



Self-Retracting

- **Always use a sharp blade.** They are safer than a dull blade.
- Wherever possible, **use a shielded knife** such as a rotary cutter or the Klever Safety Cutter.



- Ensure the blade is **properly and securely** positioned before use.



- Always **follow the manufacturer's instructions** when changing blades.
- **Properly dispose of dull and broken blades** in a puncture-resistant container.
- **Avoid disposable knives with breakaway blades**, as they are not designed for industrial use.



Breakaway Blade

This newsletter is distributed by the Kansas Automobile Dealers Workers' Compensation Fund (KADWCF) to increase awareness and stress the importance of safe work practices.

Reporting a claim to Gallagher Bassett (GB)

Fund Account Number: 004352

Internet: www.risxfacs.com

Telephone: 1-800-779-6142

Fax: 1-800-748-6159

Email: tnwclaims@tnwinc.com

Dedicated Adjuster:

Josie Landes – Senior Adjuster

Phone: 816-216-5516

Josephine_Landes@gbtpa.com

(Per above, please report claims to tnwclaims@tnwinc.com.)

Claim related medical bills should be mailed to:

Gallagher Bassett Central Bill

Processing Center

P.O. Box 2831

Clinton, IA 52733

Any other claim related information should be

mailed to your adjuster at:

Gallagher Bassett

2600 Grand Blvd., Suite 650

Kansas City, MO 64108

or Fax to: 816-942-0695

You can also email the information directly to the adjuster. The preferred method to report claims is via the internet.

