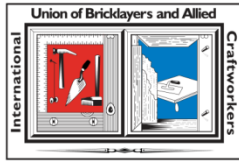


Masonry r2p Partnership



SAFETY INTERVENTIONS Selecting Safer Hand Tools

Situation

In a normal workday, masonry craftworkers work with hand tools for six or more hours.

Using a tool that requires a worker to use a forceful grip, hold one's hand or wrist in an awkward position, and/or results in excessive hand vibration can lead to work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs). Such injuries usually develop over time and can include tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and hand-arm vibration syndrome.

A craftworker's symptoms, such as achy, tired hands and wrists, may become more frequent resulting in: decreased productivity; injuries requiring time off; and workers compensation insurance claims.

Interventions

Through surveys and discussions with BAC members, contractors, and instructors, the Masonry r2p Partnership worked with CPWR-The Center for Construction Research and Training to create the *ChooseHandSafety* website, which includes guidance and resources for selecting, using, and purchasing hand tools.

- 1. Provide the right tools.** When you provide tools, make sure they are appropriate for the tasks being performed. If you have multiples of the same tool, consider offering a variety of grip sizes.
- 2. Train Workers.** Make sure your employees know how to correctly select and use hand tools.
 - Educate your employees on how to select the right tool for both the task and for their hand size. The website provides detailed information on how to determine hand size and utilize the information to select tools. Make your employees aware of this online resource.

- How a worker's hand and wrist are positioned when using a tool is just as important as the correct tool selection. There are features that can be added to tool handles, methods of using tools to improve hand-arm positioning, and exercises to strengthen certain muscles that can help to reduce the risk of injury. Toolbox talks, exercises, and other training materials can be found on the website.

- 3. Track Progress.** Improving hand safety is not a onetime activity. It requires an ongoing employer commitment and continuous monitoring to ensure that training and preventive measures are understood and making a difference. There are several ways to track progress including:

- On-site monitoring – are workers using the right tools and methods to avoid hand injuries?
- Follow-up training – to reinforce hand safety, find gaps in awareness and knowledge, and keep workers, supervisors and foremen up-to-date on the latest ways to prevent hand injuries.
- Injury data – are there fewer hand WMSD injuries?

Learn More

Visit www.ChooseHandSafety.org:

- Selecting Hand Tools -- <http://choosehandsafety.org/choosing-hand-tools>
- Safety & Health -- <http://choosehandsafety.org/safety-health/hand-tools>
- Training & More -- <http://choosehandsafety.org/training-more/hand-tools>