Box Cutters and Knives

Box cutters, knives, and other sharp tools that are used for cutting can cause painful injuries. While most cuts require only medical treatment, a serious and deeper laceration can damage a ligament or tendon and cause a much more serious injury. When you think about it, laceration prevention is pretty simple – just keep the sharp tool from contacting another part of our body. Still, most people have cut themselves at some point in their life.

The best news is that we are in complete control to prevent lacerations because we select, hold, and use the tool to prevent contact with another part of our body. Here are some basic rules for using cutting tools to prevent injuries:

Planning

- ✓ Take a few seconds to plan the job. First, select and use knives and cutters for their intended purpose and use them properly. Don't take a shortcut and use the wrong cutter or one that is dull or has defects. It's well worth the time to get the right tool and arrange the work to cut safely.

- ✓ Don't use cutters on objects that are too thick for the tool to cut and forces you exert too much force which can break a blade or result in sudden unexpected lunging movements.

- ✓ Don't forget the object that is being cut and make sure that it's secure so that it does not move unexpectedly. To repeat, it's well worth the time to arrange the work to cut safely.

Tools Use

- ✓ Before each use, check the tool for signs of wear, dull blades, or damaged blades. Safely remove and discard any damaged or defective tools.

- ✓ Wear appropriate gloves or protective equipment which can prevent or reduce the severity of a cut.

- ✓ Hold the tool properly and securely and don't get distracted until the movement is finished.

- ✓ Always push the blade away from yourself and make sure no other parts of your body are in the way which includes fingers, arms, or cutting down toward your leg.

- ✓ Stop if you need to force the blade through the material which means that it's dull or not right for the job. Find the problem and then get the right tool to finish the work. Then, make sure the right tool is available for the next cutting job.

- ✓ Never toss a cutting tool to another person, even if you believe that the blade is closed or fully retracted. On the other end, never attempt to catch a tool that is being thrown and fight the reflex to catch a falling tool.

- ✓ Store knives and tools properly with blades retracted or folded closed to help keep them sharp.

Check out our Safety Tips page for more safety information.