Seven Statistics on Hand Tool Hazards



Hand-powered tools may be safer than electrically powered ones, but they can still cause some nasty injuries. Here are seven statistics related to hand tool safety. While most people would consider hand-powered tools to be much safer than electrically powered tools, there are still significant hazards associated with workers using everything from axes to wrenches. Here are seven statistics relating to the use of hand tools:

1. Five safety tips involving knives are as follows: Use safety knives (knives with retractable blades) whenever possible; keep blades sharp; always cut away from your body; never use a knife blade as a screwdriver, and don’t work too near anyone who is using a knife.
2. Four injuries associated with using hand tools are puncture wounds; eye injuries; broken bones (such as from unintentionally striking one’s hand with a hammer); and severed fingers, tendons, or arteries if a tool slips.
3. Ten percent of hand injuries result from the improper use of hand tools. (Mines and Aggregates Safety and Health Association (MASHA))
4. Three tips for avoiding injuries while using a screwdriver are: Never use a screwdriver as a chisel or pry bar; always use the correct type and size of screwdriver for the screw, and don’t use a screwdriver with a damaged tip.
5. Wearing gloves reduces the risk of occupational hand injuries by 60 to 70 percent. (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH))
6. Injuries related to hand tools account for seven to eight percent of all compensable injuries each year. (Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industry (AWCI))
7. Blunt or dull tools may require up to 10 times the force by the user, compared to properly sharpened tools, leading to a greater likelihood for a musculoskeletal injury. (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS))