

Workshop Safety

Policy Statement

Departmental workshops play an important role in both teaching and research. However, inappropriate use of workshop equipment can cause serious injuries. To minimize the likelihood of injuries, the following procedures shall apply to all to departmental workshops and to the work of students and staff (other than professionally qualified workshop staff) who are permitted to work in such workshops. Operation of dangerous workshop equipment, outside of a designated workshop, will not normally be permitted.

Procedures

In units which operate workshops, the chair or head of the division shall appoint a workshop supervisor who will be responsible for the safe operation of the workshop.

Potentially dangerous work in departmental workshops shall only be carried out under the supervision of a workshop supervisor.

No person other than a workshop supervisor or professionally qualified workshop employee may work alone in a workshop or at times when a workshop supervisor is unavailable to supervise the work.

Academic and departmental supervisors shall ensure that staff and students whom they supervise are appropriately trained before authorizing them to carry out work in a departmental workshop.

Staff and students may only undertake such workshop tasks that have been authorized by their supervisor. While carrying out such tasks, staff and students shall:

- Follow the direction of a workshop supervisor;
- observes workshop safety rules;
- never work alone in the workshop.

Responsibility

The chair or head of the division.

The workshop supervisor is responsible for:

- Supervising all work in the workshop and ensure that no untrained person operates dangerous equipment or carries out any dangerous operations in a workshop;

- maintaining all workshop equipment in a safe working condition and ensure that all guards and related protective devices are installed and maintained in good operating order;
- providing advice to the chair or unit head on the need for modifications of the workshop or for modifications to equipment or procedures that the supervisor believes are required to maintain a safe working environment;
- providing workshop safety training and keeping a record of people trained to safely operate dangerous equipment;
- ensuring that appropriate first aid, fire fighting and other necessary emergency equipment are available and maintained in good operating order;
- ensuring that all people in the workshop use required personal protective equipment;
- conducting a formal annual inspection of the workshop to identify hazards and reporting findings to the chair or head of the division;
- promptly reporting accidents or incidents to the chair or head of the division and to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

General Workshop Safety Rules

Only those authorized to do so by a Workshop Supervisor, may work in this shop. Operation of power tools and other potentially dangerous shop work, may only be done under the supervision of a Workshop Supervisor.

Safety glasses (CSA approved) must be worn at all times while working with tools. Other protective equipment must be worn as directed by a Workshop Supervisor. Do not wear gloves, loose-fitting clothing, baggy sleeves, dangling jewellery, or neck ties that could become entangled in machinery.

You may not use any power tool until you have been trained in safe operation techniques by a Workshop Supervisor.

Disconnect power before making adjustments to power tools. Do not service energized equipment.

Take appropriate steps to prevent release of dusts or noxious fumes.

Take appropriate fire prevention precautions when your work generates heat or sparks, or involves open flames or flammable liquids.

Do not remove machine guards.

Keep shop clean and tidy. When not in use, store tools, equipment, and supplies properly. Clean-up after you complete your work.

Table Saw Safety Rules

Extreme care is needed when operating a table saw. Accidents can result in very serious injury.

You may not use the table saw until trained in safe operating techniques by a Workshop Supervisor.

Safety glasses (CSA approved) must be worn in the shop at all times while using a table saw. When using the table saw or other power tools, Do not wear gloves, loose fitting clothing, baggy sleeves, dangling jewelry, or neck ties that could become entangled.

Do not cut material that contains nails, screws, knots, or other imperfections of materials.

Before cutting, disconnect the power. Select the correct blade.

Ensure that:

- the blade is secured, sharp and turns freely;
- the throat plate, blade guard and spreader are positioned properly;
- the table is clean and free of obstructions;
- the blade height is set 6 mm higher than necessary to clear the stock.

Feed work against the direction of blade rotation.

Use rip fence, mitre gauge, hold downs, push sticks, anti-kick back devices, and feather boards as instructed.

Hold the work firmly against the mitre gauge or rip fence.

Operate the saw with your body positioned out of line with the blade.

Do not cut free hand. Always use the mitre gauge or rip fence. Only use both the mitre gauge and the rip fence when they can both be positioned on the same side of the blade.

Feed wood with a push stick when the fence is positioned within 6 inches of the blade and when making the last 6 inches of a cut.

When cross cutting, remove rip fence. Do not use fence as a cut-off gauge.

Never reach behind or over the blade.

Avoid awkward positions that could lead to a sudden slip and contact with the blade.

Support material that extends beyond the table using table extensions or roller tables.

Do not operate the table saw without the guard in place.

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