Our Hands at Work

Health & Safety

October 2026

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Safety Involves Everyone. Know your Rights.

Right to Know

As a worker, you have the right to be informed by the employer of known or likely hazards in the workplace and to be provided with the information, instructions, education, training, and supervision necessary to protect your health and safety.

Right to Participate

Allows workers to have input on the steps taken by the employer to ensure health and safety.

Workers can provide input on what would make the workplace safe.

Right to Refuse

Normally used when the first two rights fail to ensure your health and safety.

However, workers should not be afraid to exercise their right to refuse when they believe the work will endanger their health or safety, or that of others.

Right to Stop Work

Permits specified persons to stop work in "dangerous circumstances".

In most cases, it takes worker and management certified joint health and safety committee members to direct an employer to stop dangerous work (joint stoppage).

Absolute zero

Absolute Zero is our goal

Our Absolute Zero program solidifies our commitment to:

- ✓ Zero accidents
- ✓ Zero injuries
- ✓ Zero harm

Kelly is the first workforce solutions company to create and maintain a zero-injury program.

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Your Hands: Most Valuable BUT also Vulnerable

Hands are superbly designed tools of amazing strength and dexterity ...

- A total of 27 hand and wrist bones are connected to the muscles by tendons.
- Hands are the part of the body most often injured, and these injuries are sometimes difficult to heal.
- 500,000 injures in Canada every year.
- 50% of the claims Kelly submits yearly are hand related injuries.
- The types of injuries are repetitive strains, cuts, burns and impact injuries.



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Mechanical Hazards

A hazard is any injury that can cause harm.

There are numerous mechanical hazards from tools, equipment, machines, structures and vehicles:

- Chains, gears, rollers, wheels and transmission belts.
- Spiked or jagged tools.
- Edges that catch and tear.
- Cutting, chopping and grinding mechanisms.
- Cutting tools such as knives and presses.
- Falling objects, etc.
- strains, cuts, burns and impact injuries.



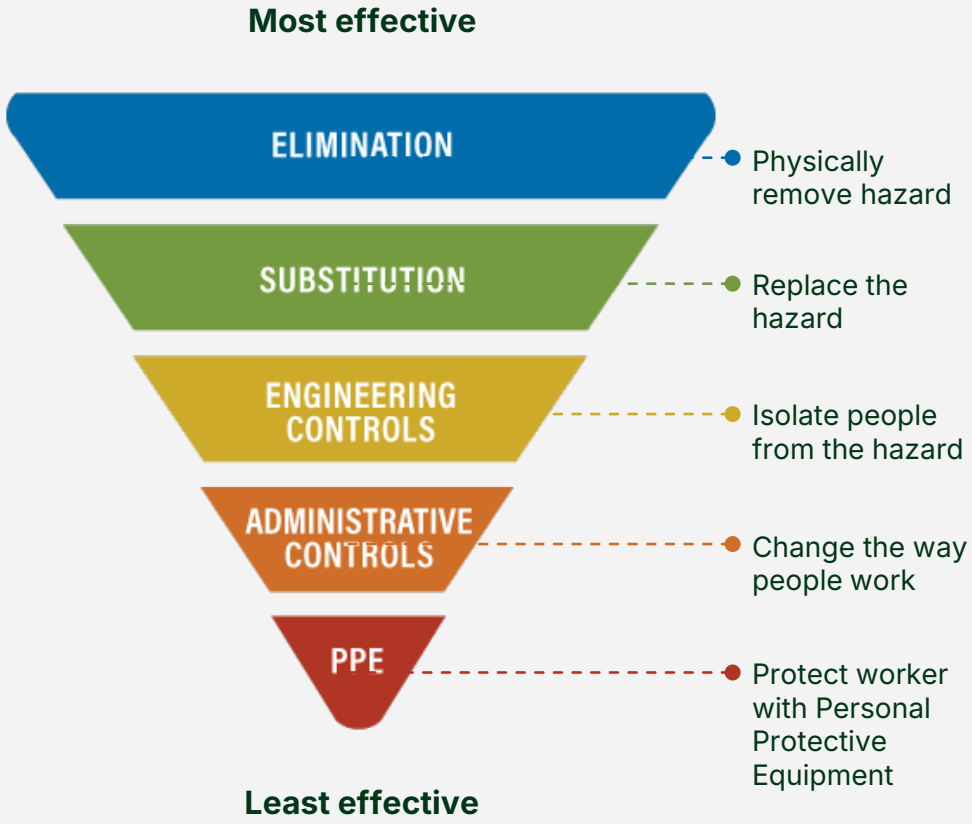
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Mechanical Hazards

Mechanical Hazard Prevention

- Work at your own pace. The frequency of hand injuries is proportional to how quickly you work.
- Stay alert! Always watch what your hands are doing.
- Use a push stick to feed a circular saw or other power tools. Use long magnetic poles to retrieve items.
- Know how to handle the tools and equipment you work with. Don’t take shortcuts.
- Wrenches should properly fit nuts and bolts.
- Never start repair work on power tools or machinery without first checking that the power is shut off.
- Use different colours, shapes, or sizes to distinguish safety shut-off controls from all other controls.

Hierarchy of Controls



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Heat and Cold

Burns to the hands can be caused by exhaust pipes, sparks, steam, hot pipes, hot liquids and metals.

Even extreme cold can cause burns. Hands and fingers turn numb at -15°C; increasing the risk of accidents.

A few prevention tips:

- Use gloves appropriate for the job and temperature.
- Insulate tool handles.
- Let hot surfaces cool before working on them.
- Before hands become too cold, take time to warm them up.



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Chemical Hazards

Chemical substances may irritate the skin, causing redness, itching, eczema, inflammation, dryness and serious burns. Some chemical products are doubly dangerous: in addition to being irritants, they are toxic when absorbed by the body through the skin.

Degreasers, metals, plant and animal oils, dyes, inks, cleaning solutions and many other chemical products can damage the skin and subcutaneous tissues of your hands.

A few prevention tips:

- Protect your skin by wearing proper gloves for the substances being handled.
- Wash your skin well with soap and warm water or use special cleansers, especially after direct contact with a chemical substance and before smoking or eating.
- Don’t wipe your hands with chemically contaminated rags.
- Use barrier creams when there is no other way to protect your hands. Barrier creams must be reapplied after you wash your hands.



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Risk of Infection

Hands exposed to materials contaminated by microbes can become infected. For example, tetanus and hepatitis C are infections that can be transmitted through hand wounds. Hepatitis C immunization is important for health care workers and laboratory workers.

A few prevention tips:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly.
- Wear proper gloves to protect your hands.
- Use safe handling techniques.
- Always obtain first aid for every injury, no matter how minor.



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Strains and Sprains

Strains and sprains occur when the muscles and ligaments that hold the joints in place are bruised, pulled, or torn. These injuries often occur when you lift heavy objects or try to break a sudden fall.

A few prevention tips:

- Beware of broken floors and torn or curled rugs or mats. Report these hazards for repair.
- Use handrails on stairs.
- Never jump down from a platform, scaffold, loading dock or other height.
- Use ladders properly for climbing.
- When moving heavy or bulky things, use a lifting device or ask for help.



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Fractures

Fractures occur in what are referred to as “hand traps”, such as wheels, pulleys, and rollers or when the hand strikes a hard object.

A few prevention tips:

- Keep your hands away from machines in operation.
- Position hands carefully so fingers won’t get caught.
- Feed rotary or operating machines with a push stick.



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Crush Injuries

Crush injuries damage deep tissues and bones. They occur when your hand is caught between two solid parts that strike each other, such as falling objects, drawers and doors.

A few prevention tips:

- Always use the protective devices on machines.
- Be sure you can see what you are doing and don’t take dangerous shortcuts to get the job done faster.
- When using bench-mounted machines, make sure they are securely fastened in place.
- Make sure that your gloves don’t get caught in moving parts.



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Abrasions and Cuts

Abrasions and lacerations occur when skin is rubbed away by friction from belts, sanders, grinders and rough materials. Broken skin allows for easy absorption of toxic or infectious substances by the body.

Cuts can occur when you use dull cutting tools or handle sharp metals and other materials with jagged edges.

A few prevention tips:

- Do not remove protective devices from machines.
- Keep your hands and fingers away from cutting tools.
- Pass tools to other workers handle first.
- Store tools safely when not in use and replace worn out or broken tools.
- Use grips, suction cups, or magnetic pads to help carry metal or glass sheeting.
- Wear proper gloves (i.e., metal mesh gloves when cutting meat).
- Don’t hold the workpiece in your hand while using a hand tool. Under pressure, the tool could slip and cause injury. The piece should be on a flat surface and firmly secured.



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Puncture Wounds

Puncture wounds occur when pointed objects or tools pierce the skin and deep tissues (i.e., from glass, fishhooks, thorns, animal bites or nails hidden in wood).

A few prevention tips:

- Use adequate hand protection.
- Remove all debris and scrap materials from the work area. Watch for nails and other sharp objects when handling used lumber.
- Use the right tool for the job and use it properly.
- Never use screwdrivers as levers, chisels or perform work for which they are not designed. Never carry screwdrivers in your pocket.
- Files should never be used without a handle because the sharp pointed tang can be driven into your hand.



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Repetitive Motion

Repetitive Motion Prevention

- Be aware of the positions and movements of your hands and wrists as you work. Try to alternate or change your movements to reduce repetition and strain.
- Rotate functions and vary tasks.
- Plan the work and work area to suit yourself rather than the machine.
- Tools should be light, balanced and the right size for you.
- Tool handles should be bent so that the wrist stays in a comfortable, natural position.
- Whenever possible, work with your forearms close to your body and supported.
- Doctors may advise wrist supports to prevent twisting injuries.



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Things to Consider

Things to consider:

- Your hands must be protected against the hazards of the particular job.
- Gloves should NOT be worn around machines with moving parts that could catch them and pull the hands into danger areas (i.e., machines with pulleys or power-driven machines with rotating shafts).
- Protective sleeves should be long enough to leave no gap between the gloves and the sleeves.
- Stay alert and work safely. Remember that an injury can happen in a split second and result in a lifetime of disablement.
- Support and work with your employer and your health and safety committee or representative to implement an effective hand protection program.



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Questions?

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