Utility Knife Safety

Use of utility knives is very common in workplaces. They are designed to cut cardboard, wood, plastics, fibers, ceiling tiles, wallpaper, and other materials. A utility knife comes with a variety of lengths and styles so that it can be made suitable for many tasks. In the construction industry they can be useful for cutting shingles/packages, and scraping paint from the wall. Improper use of a utility knife can cause injuries. Using wrong size blades for a task, using defective knives, being exposed to blade tips, and failing to inspect blades are just a few of the potential causes of injury. All retractable utility knives fall under OSHA blade guard standards, which simply require that knife blades have a guard when they are not in use. Educating and training employees on the proper practices for the safe use of tools will help reduce or eliminate injuries and will contribute to workplace productivity and profit.

Utility Knife Safety:

When using a utility knife:
- Establish a balanced body position.
- Look at the cut line. Do not get distracted by talking to other people.
- Place your non-cutting hand on the opposite side of the box, away from the cutting line.
- Do not draw the knife toward yourself.
- Do not put too much pressure on the blade.
- Do not cut more than the knife can handle.

Store the knife properly with the blade extended.

Use required proper PPE.
- Use safety glasses to protect your eyes.
- Wear cut-resistant gloves and sleeves to protect your hands.

Inspect the knife before use.

Do not use a dull blade.

Follow manufacturer instructions for changing the blade.

Dispose of dull or broken blades.

Do not use a utility knife on loose objects.

If handing a utility knife to someone else pass him or her the handle, no the blade.
- Do not use disposable knives for industrial purposes.

Work Site Review: Hazards/Safety Suggestions

_________________________  ____________________________
Company Name:  Work Site Location:

Date:  Start Time:  Finish Time:  Foreman/Supervisor:

Employee Signatures: (continue on back of sheet if necessary)

_________________________  ___________________________
_________________________  ___________________________
_________________________  ___________________________

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness)

Manager/Supervisor’s Signature:

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