Tool Box Talk

Portable, Hand-Held Electric Tools

Electrical tools face harsh conditions on site. When misused, they get damaged and become dangerous. In one year, there were 194 reported incidents of electric shock involving portable electric tools.

Before-Use Checks

1. Make sure the casing isn’t damaged – if it is, don’t use it
2. Make sure that all cables, plugs or connectors are sound and not damaged
3. Use tools on correct power supply as instructed on the maker’s label. Only 110 volt or battery operated tools are permitted on site
4. Ensure the tool is properly earthed, unless it is an approved type that does not require earthing
5. Ensure the cable is long enough to reach your work without straining it

Using Portable Electric Tools

1. Portable electric tools should only be used for their designated purpose
2. Ensure switches are working correctly before connecting to the power supply
3. Wear eye protection if there is any risk to your eyes
4. Disconnect tools when not in use
5. Electric power tools should be regularly inspected and maintained by a competent electrician

Hazards

1. Keep power cables off the floor. They may get damaged or cause someone to trip
2. Electrical tools often present a noise hazard – wear ear protection if necessary
3. Avoid standing on a damp or wet surface when using electrical equipment. Keep equipment clean and dry
4. Never connect a portable electric tool to a lighting socket
5. Don’t use blunt, worn or damaged bits and accessories
6. Portable electrical tools which have become wet should be allowed to dry then checked by a competent person for electrical safety before being refused

REMEMBER: Look after portable electric tools and they will look after you

If any issues are raised that need clarifying contact your safety adviser