

Safety Note #43

PORTABLE SANDER SAFETY



Consumer Product Safety Commission data indicate a total of approximately 1,800 people were treated in hospitals for power sander injuries during 2003. Of this total, 70% of the injuries were to fingers and hands. California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 8, Section 3557 addresses switches and controls for portable power tools. CCR Title 8, Section 3203 (7) requires employees be trained on the equipment they use in the workplace.

Pre-Use Activities

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the portable sander operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Before using, always inspect the portable sander for damage or disrepair. In addition, assure belts, pads, or discs are properly secured, tensioned, and/or tracking. Inspect the electrical cord and plug for defects.
- If a portable sander fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the sander from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.

Operating Precautions

- Always wear safety goggles and a dust mask when using a portable sander. As appropriate, wear suitable hearing protection.
- Prior to starting, replace worn or torn belt, pad, or disc sand paper. Select the proper-sized sanding grit for the type of sanding task to be performed.
- Always assure that the power switch is in the off position before plugging in the sander power cord.
- Where possible, secure work stock with a vise or clamps.
- Always turn the sander on before placing it in contact with the work stock.
- Firmly hold the sander by gripping both handles.
- Keep the sander power cord away from the sanding work stock.
- While sanding, keep your hands and fingers clear of the sanding belt, pad, or disc.
- Avoid pushing down on the sander to reduce the possibility of sander or work stock kickback.
- Do not yank on the power cord to disconnect the sander.
- Always turn the power switch off and disconnect the power cord before changing sand paper or adjusting belts, pads, or discs.
- When finished, clean up saw dust and dispose of in trash.

