

**Bi-Weekly Safety Tool Box Talks**  
**James Peterson Sons, Inc.**  
**JPS, Inc. Utility Division**  
**Buteyn-Peterson Construction Co., Inc.**  
July 2009

## Use the Right Tool

Using the right tool for the job is just common sense. But it's likely that on one or two occasions, you've used whichever tool was handiest for a quick fix. Or maybe you've watched as a co-worker used a wrench, pliers, or a pipe—as a hammer. While this substitution might seem harmless, you should consider what you're putting at risk when you take such unsafe shortcuts.

To work efficiently and reduce injuries, it's important that you use the correct tool for every task. Before you begin your work, think about the tasks you'll perform and the tools you'll need. If you plan ahead, you won't have to make do or make extra trips to the toolbox or truck. Spending a little bit of time thinking ahead will save you a lot of difficulty and will help you work safely. Using the right tool also makes your job easier and improves the quality of the end product. Ask yourself the following questions to figure out if you are using the correct tool for the job:

**What's the task at hand?** Is it something I do regularly and can do with the tools I normally carry? Does this task require specialty tools that will allow me to do better and more professional work?

**What are the functions of the tools I have?** Make sure you know the functions and the limitations of the tools you have. Then match up the task with the tool. Don't get creative here. Keep a mental inventory of the tools in your truck and you'll know if you have the resources you need to get the job done properly and safely.

**What is the condition of the workarea?** If it is wet, take special care when using electrical tools. If it is cold, make sure your gloves won't hamper your dexterity.

**What kind of help do I need?** For small jobs, a hand tool might be fine, but for repetitive jobs, a power tool may help you avoid strain and cumulative trauma injuries. Consider the grips on your tools—work gloves may improve your grip. PPE can be a type of tool; always make sure you have the PPE you need.

Tools are designed for specific purposes. They generally are not interchangeable. When you use a tool for something other than its intended purpose, you increase the likelihood of damaging the tool. More importantly, you also increase your chances of suffering an injury, strain, sprain, or discomfort caused by using an improper tool in an awkward posture.

If you're not sure what kind of tool to use for a task, ask your supervisor or crew boss. You might feel uncomfortable asking the question, but you'll feel a lot more uncomfortable—for the rest of your life—if you lose a finger because you're using the wrong tool. Safety is the most important tool of all—use it regularly.

.....  
**SAFETY REMINDER**  
.....

**When you lend a tool to neighbors or family members, teach them to use it properly. Discuss potential hazards. Have them wear the PPE necessary for their safety.**

Safety Manual Reference: *Page 40 Para. 13.0 (1) Tools & Equipment*

I have read the above safety topic.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

"Return after reading and signing to the office with your time card"