



## **Policy 18**

# **SAFETY**

### **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set the basic requirements for safety practices for Pomona Valley Habitat for Humanity.

### **2.0 Safety Policy**

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970, clearly states our common goal of safe and healthful working conditions to be the first consideration in operating this business.

Safety and health in our business must be part of every operation. Without question, it is every employee's responsibility at all levels.

It is intent of this company to comply with all laws. To do this, we must constantly be aware of conditions in all work areas that can produce injuries. No employee is required to work at a job he/she knows is not safe or healthful. Your cooperation in detecting hazards and, in turn, controlling them, is a condition of your employment. Inform your supervisor immediately of any situation beyond your ability or authority to correct.

The personal safety and health of each employee of this company is of primary importance. Prevention of occupationally-induced injuries and illnesses is of such consequence that it will be given precedence over operating productivity, whenever necessary. To the greatest degree possible, management will provide all mechanical and physical activities required for personal safety and health, in keeping with the highest standards.

We will maintain a safety and health program conforming to the best practices of organizations of this type. To be successful, such a program must embody proper attitudes toward injury and illness prevention on the part of supervisors and employees. It also requires cooperation in all safety and health matters, not only between supervisor and employee, but also between each employee and his/her co-workers. Only through such a cooperative effort can a safety program in the best interest of all be established and preserved.

Our objective is a safety and health program that will reduce the number of injuries and illnesses to an absolute minimum, not merely in keeping with, but surpassing, the best experience of operations similar to ours. Our goal is zero accidents and injuries.

Our safety and health program will include:

- Providing mechanical and physical safeguards to the maximum extent possible.
- Conducting safety and health inspections to find, eliminate or control safety and health hazards as well as unsafe working conditions and practices, and to comply fully with the safety and health standards for every job.
- Training all employees in good safety and health practices.
- Providing necessary personal protective equipment, and instructions for use and care.
- Developing and enforcing safety and health rules, and requiring that employees cooperate with these rules as a condition of employment.
- Investigating, promptly and thoroughly, every accident to find out what caused it and correct the problem so it will not happen again.
- Setting up a system of recognition and awards for outstanding safety service or performance.

We recognize that the responsibilities for safety and health are shared:

- The employer accepts the responsibilities for leadership of the safety and health program, for its effectiveness and improvement, and for providing the safeguards required to ensure safe conditions.
- Supervisors are responsible for developing proper attitude toward safety and health in themselves and in those they supervise, and for ensuring that all operations are performed with the utmost regard for the safety and health of all personnel involved, including themselves.
- Employees are responsible for wholehearted, genuine operation of all aspects of the safety and health program—including compliance with all rules and regulations and for continuously practicing safety while performing their duties.

## **2.1 Guidelines for a safe attitude**

- A. THINK before you do your work or task.
- B. If you are uncertain about how to do a task or how to operate a power tool—ASK A SUPERVISOR.
- C. Concentrate on your task and eliminate distractions.
- D. Know where the first-aid kit is located and how to get emergency help.
- E. Inspect all power tools, hand tools, ladders and scaffolding on a daily basis.
- F. Advise your supervisor IMMEDIATELY of any unsafe or hazardous tool or condition.

## **2.2 Proper safety equipment**

- Proper clothing is as essential to safety as the proper selection and use of tools. Wear clothes and gloves that are appropriate for the work and weather conditions. Loose clothing is dangerous around power tools.

- Workers shall wear work boots or thick-soled shoes at all times when on a construction site. Any worker wearing sandals or other types of inappropriate footwear shall not be permitted to remain at a construction site.
- Hard hats are to be worn while doing demolition work, during the framing phase of construction, or when required by a supervisor, and are to be made available to workers on each job site at all times.
- Protective glasses will be available for every construction worker. A worker must wear protective glasses any time he or she is operating a power tool or when instructed by a supervisor.
- Each worker must wear a dust mask when installing insulation, sanding or when instructed by a supervisor.
- Ear plugs must be worn when using a power tool for a prolonged period of time or when instructed by a supervisor. Ear plugs are to be made available to workers on each job site at all times.

### **2.3 Power tools and other electrical equipment**

- A power tool should not be used without proper instruction on its use and on what can happen if the tool is not used properly. The instruction should be done by a qualified person and should be given to all workers; even experienced do-it-yourselfers should receive instruction. The trainee should use the power tool in the presence of the instructor, until the instructor is satisfied that the trainee knows how to use the power tool properly.
- Never lower or carry a power tool by its cord. Clean tools daily. Power tools should be checked for defective switches, cords, plugs and proper grounding. Defective tools should not be used and should either be reported to the supervisor or labeled and brought to the tool trailer for repair immediately. (Do not wait until the end of the day.)

To avoid electrical shock, the following rules must be obeyed:

- A. A three-pronged plug must be used on all electric power tools.
- B. Extension cords must not have frayed insulation or be fastened with staples, hung from nails or suspended from wires.
- C. All temporary lights must be equipped with non-conductive guards.

### **2.4 Hand tools**

- Always select the correct type and size of tool for your work and be sure it is sharp and properly adjusted. Guard against using any tool if the handle is loose or in poor condition. Dull tools are hazardous to use because excessive force must be used to make them cut. Oil or dirt on a tool may cause it to slip and cause an injury. When using tools, hold them correctly. Most edged tools should be held in both hands with the cutting action away from yourself. Avoid using your hand or fingers as a guide to start a cut, but if it is necessary, use extreme caution.
- Handle and carry tools with care. Keep edged and pointed tools turned downward. Carry only a few tools at one time unless they are mounted in a special holder or carried in a tool belt. Anyone working with a hammer at a height should wear a hammer loop or tool belt, and, when not in use, the hammer should be kept in the loop or belt and not placed on a sloping surface or in a precarious position. Do not carry sharp tools in your pockets.

- When not in use, tools should be kept in special boxes, chests or cabinets.

### **A special word on saws:**

- A. Don't bind the blade of any saw. When cutting long panels, the blade may bind, and the saw mill will catch and kick back toward the operator. Use small wood wedges or shim shingles to spread the saw cut as you go along.
- B. Maintain the blade guard. A spring-actuated blade guard often can become bent and won't slide quickly, or the spring can become stretched so the return is slow. Repair any damage to the guard as soon as it happens, and NEVER tie the guard back out of the way.
- C. Support what you are working on properly. Never attempt to cut something that could tilt or fall and cause the saw to slip.

## **2.5 Ladders**

- Inspect a ladder before you use it. If the ladder is unsafe, don't use it. Look for wear and tear, loose rungs and defects.
- Use a ladder that will reach the work. An extension ladder should reach 3 feet above the work level. Move your ladder with your work. If both of your shoulders are extended outside the ladder while you are working, you are reaching too far. When using an extension ladder, use the "4-to-1" rule: For every 4 feet of height, move the bottom of the ladder 1 foot away from the wall. A ladder is pitched at the proper, safe angle if you can grasp a rung at shoulder height.
- Place your ladder on solid footing. If there is a danger of the ladder moving while you work, tie it down. If there is a danger that the ladder will be hit, barricade it. If the feet of the ladder are not level, dig the ground out under one foot with the claw of a hammer rather than raise one foot with blocks.
- Never use an aluminum ladder in the vicinity of electrical lines and never use a ladder outdoors during inclement weather or on very windy days. Carry tools and materials in proper carrying devices and keep your hands free for climbing. When climbing, always face the ladder.

## **2.6 Scaffolding**

- All scaffolding that is elevated 10 feet or more must be equipped with a safety railing. All scaffolds must be equipped with a toeboard to eliminate the possibility that tools or debris will be kicked or pushed onto people below. A scaffold must be designed to support four times the weight of the workers and the materials resting on it. Scaffolding components that are not designed to be compatible should not be mixed.
- Inspect all scaffolding each day before using it. Never use damaged or defective equipment and avoid rusted parts since their strength is unknown. When erecting scaffolding, provide adequate sills for the scaffold posts and use base plates. Use adjusting screws, not blocks, when on an uneven grade. Make sure to plumb and level scaffolding and do not force end braces when constructing the scaffolding.
- Many scaffolding accidents are caused by defective planking. Use only properly graded and inspected lumber for planking. Inspect planking daily for splits and knots, and remove defective or damaged planking.

## 2.7 Clean work site

- A clean work place is a safe work place. This refers to the neatness and good order of the construction site. Maintaining good housekeeping contributes to the efficiency of the worker and is important in preventing accidents.
- Position building materials and supplies in carefully laid out piles to allow adequate aisles and walkways. Clean up all rubbish and scrap materials on a daily basis. Do not permit blocks of wood, nails, bolts, empty cans, pipe, wire or other materials to accumulate on the work site. They interfere with work and can constitute a hazard. Keep tools and equipment that are not being used in chests, panels or tool boxes. This protects the tools and the workers. Never leave a work site unguarded unless all tools and materials have been properly secured.

## 2.8 Poisons and toxic substances

- The poisons and toxic substances that can be found most often on a work site are asbestos, lead oxides, solvents and animal feces. Special care must be taken when you come in contact with any of these substances or any unfamiliar substance.
- If you discover asbestos fiber being used as pipe, boiler or heating duct insulation, contact your supervisor immediately.
- DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE ASBESTOS FIBER ON YOUR OWN.
- Scraping exterior woodwork, demolishing lead-painted walls and stripping old mill work are the principal ways that workers can be exposed to lead chips, dust and particles. Contact your supervisor immediately if you discover any lead-painted surfaces. Masks are the best protection against breathing germs that can be borne in dust containing animal feces (such as rodent droppings).

## 2.9 Emergency medical care

If someone is injured on the job, contact your supervisor immediately and summon any needed medical help. You also should use the supplies located in the first-aid kit to stabilize the injury as much as possible until medical help arrives. Your supervisor is trained in first-aid and will help any injured worker. Insurance forms necessary to obtain emergency medical care are located in every first-aid kit.

## 2.10 Steps to Implement Safety

Post Work Crew Safety Posters on site.

Provide a copy of Safety Policy #18 to volunteers during volunteer orientations and require they read the policy *before* signing a volunteer liability form.

Have Site Hosts provide a ***Sample Safety Orientation Talk, such as:***

We don't want anything to ruin your experience today. This includes an accident of any sort.

Some simple guidelines will help make it a Safe Day. They include:

- Be aware of situations which can lead to risky or dangerous situations, your attitude is important.
- Help maintain a clean work area . . . clutter leads to accidents.

- Be sure you are wearing the necessary protective equipment, including glasses, hard hats, shoes, dust masks, and ear plugs.
- Do not take chances.
- Report all unsafe conditions to supervisor.
- If there is an injury, know whom to contact and where first aid is.
- Be particularly careful about power tools and saws.
- Ladder safety.
- Scaffolding.
- Other areas of concern.

## **2.11 Minimum Age Restrictions**

Pomona Valley Habitat for Humanity complies with federal labor laws that participants must be at least 16 years of age to do construction work.

We request that there be at least one adult for every four to five youth (16- and 17- year olds).

There are safety rules in construction that prohibit younger volunteers and limit use of power tools to more mature participants.

Ages 16 through 18 can do general construction including general carpentry, but are restricted from doing excavation, demolition, use power tools, work at heights above 6 feet, or do roofing.

Ages 19 and older can do any of the various construction-related jobs without limitations.

**Approved by the Board of Directors via email vote on February 4, 2008.**