# TOOLBOX TALK #10

## INSPECT YOUR HAND TOOLS – PART I

Workers who use hand and/or power tools can expose themselves and coworkers to personal injuries and illnesses such as lacerations, crushes, burns, amputations, fractures and musculoskeletal disorders, skin and pulmonary illnesses, sight and hearing damage, and electrical shock and burns.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2016 that the private industry sector recorded 40,600 injuries and illnesses involving days away from work cases (DAWC) involving tools, 29,680 of these injuries happened while using non-powered tools and 10,920 during the use of powered tools. The hand was the part of the body most affected. Here's what to check for with HAND TOOLS to reduce the risk of these injuries.

***Screwdrivers***

- Handles are tight in the shank, clean, not worn or cracked and do not show signs that the screwdrivers were used as a chisel or as a punch.
- If they are electrically insulated, insulation has not been compromised, exposing the underlying metal shank.
- The shanks are straight and do not show signs the screwdriver was used as a pry bar or submitted to extra turning power.
- The tips of the blades in slotted screwdrivers show a straight edge.
- The tips of the Phillips screwdrivers have the star configuration well designed.

***Hammers and mallets***

- No tape is wrapped around the handles.
- All handles do not show slivers or cracking.
- The handles, if not integral, are firmly and correctly attached to the head of the hammers.
- The heads are not damaged and the faces are not mushroomed.

***Wrenches***

- SAE and/or metric systems wrenches are available as necessary.
- Larger wrenches or commercial handle extenders in case a superior amount of torque is necessary during the operations are available.
- If hand and power wrenches are used, check that the sockets of one are not used in the other.
- Adjustable wrenches are not being permanently used in place of fixed opening wrenches.
- The jaws of pipe wrenches are not worn to the point of not providing the necessary grip against a pipe.
- Wrenches do not present deformations caused by being abused.

***Saws***

- The handles are firmly attached to the blades or to the frames.
- Blades are tightly attached and not dull or damaged.
- The orientation of the teeth – hacksaws usually have the teeth pointing forward, thus cutting during the "push" stroke.