

STAY SAFE WITH SOCIETY

USING THE PROPER TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

Sometimes a worker will use materials or equipment that they shouldn't just to get the job done. This can lead to serious injury. How many times have you seen the following?

- Concrete blocks used to support scaffolding instead of the correct equipment (screw jacks and pads)? Concrete blocks may be handy to support a scaffolding system, act as a stepstool, or support some other form of elevated platform. But you don't really know if the concrete blocks have hidden cracks and could possibly collapse. They are not designed for such loading.
- Someone using a five-gallon bucket as a stepladder? What if the lid collapses, resulting in a serious fall/injury? Or the bucket could tip. Wouldn't it be better if you utilized a stepladder or built a horse-scaffold system?
- Someone using a screwdriver as a pry bar? One worker attempted to pry a heavy piece of equipment with a screwdriver and the shaft broke. The other piece flew out, causing a severe eye injury.

Whenever you have to confront an unusual task -- especially when it requires specialized tools -- you should pre-plan instead of using makeshift tools and equipment. Here are some ways you can do that:

- Before you go to work, think of the activities and job requirements you may find and break down the job tasks into individual steps.
- Determine what exposures or hazards may arise while performing the task and come up with safe procedures and equipment to do it.
- Make sure ladders, scaffolding, and other climbing equipment are in good working order.



CHECKLIST

- Do you have the correct tools for the job?
- Is all the equipment in proper working condition?
- Do not use equipment in poor condition or in need of repair.
- Is all personal protective equipment in proper working condition?

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