

Worksite: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic C337: Knives and Utility Knives

**Introduction:** Knives are necessary tools which have been around since man first started making tools. Although knives have been around longer than any other tool, people still misuse and handle knives incorrectly causing accidents and injuries on a regular basis. Knowing how to properly use and care for knives is essential for their safe handling. Following are guidelines for the safe use and care of knives:

### Always cut away from yourself:

Although it seems like common sense to cut away from yourself when using a sharp blade, accidents happen daily as a result of people ignoring this rule. For example, it is a common practice with box knives to reach across a box and pull the knife toward you (this is also a common way to cut yourself).

Instead, try kneeling in front of the box, place your hand on top of the box to hold it, and draw the knife across the box, away from yourself. If your blade is as sharp as it should be, this will work as easily as pulling the knife toward you without the threat of cutting yourself.

### A sharper knife is a safer knife:

People often assume that a dull knife is safer because there is less danger of cutting yourself with a dull blade. The fact is that a sharper blade allows you to cut using less force and gives you greater control of the tool. Always keep your knife blade sharp, or replace the blade in your utility knife as often as needed.

### Guidelines for the safe use of knives:

- Use a solid surface to cut on. Never hold an object in your lap, or against any part of your body to make a cut.
- Do not hold small objects in your hand while cutting (i.e. bagels, etc.).
- Never use a knife for any purpose other than cutting. A knife blade is not a screwdriver, pry bar, or can opener. Always use the correct tool for the job.
- Retract the blade of utility knives or close folding knives when not actually making a cut.
- Do not store an exposed blade in a pocket, toolbelt, or anywhere someone might reach into blindly.
- Only extend the blade of box knives as far as needed to cut through the box. Overextending the blade will increase the risk of cutting the box contents, or breaking the blade off.
- Use hand and arm protection if your job requires a lot of fast work with a blade. Cut resistant gloves are available for this purpose.
- Use the right knife for the job (do not use a machete to peel radishes).
- Keep your knives oiled and clean by hand with a soft cloth. Do not wash a knife in a sink or dishwasher unless the knife is designed for this use. It may cause rust or other damage to the knife.
- If you drop a knife, do not attempt to catch it; let it come to a complete rest before picking it up.
- Hold a knife by the handle only, do not place your thumb or finger on the blade.
- Hand knives to another person handle first, with the cutting edge pointed away from your palm.
- Do not startle someone who is using a knife.
- Do not run your thumb or finger down the blade to test the sharpness.
- Store knives with the blade cutting edge down or covered. Knife racks, sheaths, or blocks work best for this purpose. If you store knives in a drawer, place them in a separate compartment so that you do not have to sort through the knives to find other items.
- Knives are a tool which can be dangerous if misused, do not play with knives.

**Conclusion:** Use your knives safely and they will do the job they are intended to do. Also, check out the safety training meetings on First Aid for Bleeding #100, and First Aid for Lacerations # 5

**Employee Attendance:** (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

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*These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.*