KNIFE SAFETY

Watch someone use a knife sometime and notice how often they risk being injured by cutting toward their body. Sometimes when cutting a rope, we bend the rope into a loop and insert the knife into the loop facing upward. When the knife is drawn up through the rope, the force of the cutting action can bring it close to (or toward) the face or other body parts. Another unsafe but common use of box knives is to reach across the box and draw the knife toward you. These actions are *not* safe practices! Sometimes, the cutting instruments we use are not the sharpest. Remember a sharp knife is a safer knife. It takes less force to cut through an object with a sharp knife. This gives you greater control of the blade. When heavy force is applied, the blade often cuts deeper than intended. Hand and arm protection are available for workers who frequently use cutting tools. Kevlar or other cut-resistant gloves protect hands and arms from cuts. Safe workers wear hand and arm protection consistently. The bottom line is to practice good knife safety in all situations where knives are used.

Use these tips when handling knives and other cutting tools to ensure your safety:
- ✓ **DO** direct sharp points and edges away from you.
- ✓ **DO** always use sharp cutting tools. If they are dull, sharpen them.
- ✓ **DO** use knives for the operation for which they are intended.
- ✓ **DO** carry knives with their tips pointed towards the floor.
- ✓ **DO** wear cut-resistant gloves at all times when cutting.
- ✓ **DO** ensure others know how to properly and safely use various types of knives.
- ✓ **DO NOT** attempt to catch a falling knife.
- ✓ **DO NOT** use knives with broken or loose handles.
- ✓ **DO NOT** use knives as a can opener or ice pick.
- ✓ **DO NOT** pick up knives by their blades.

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