

Hand Safety – Cut Prevention For Grocery Stores

As benign and safe as they may seem – grocery stores can be a dangerous place to work - especially for the hard-working employees of the meat departments, delis and produce departments. Statistics show that accidents in the work place caused by cutting or piercing instruments accounted for about 3 million hospital visits in 2002 (7% of the total)*. **WHY?** cuts & lacerations from slicers, knives & other sharp tools!

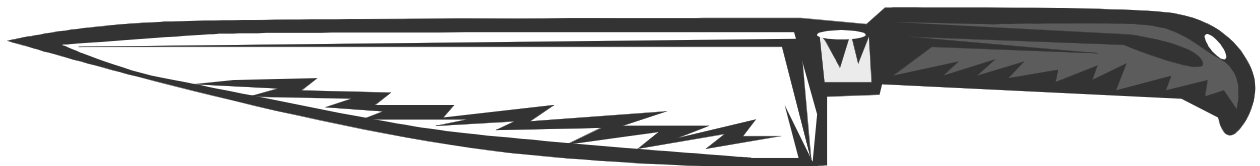
Knife Safety Tips:

- Always wear a cut-resistant glove (Kevlar) when using a knife!
- Keep knives sharp. If your knife is sharp, it will slide easily through what you are cutting, with little force involved. When dull, more force is required to do the cutting increasing your risk of injury.
- Don't cut with the edge toward you or your fingers. It's best to try and cut away from you in case the knife slips.
- Watch where the edge and point of the knife is pointing. Avoid talking, walking or working on other projects while holding a knife – put it down!
- Don't leave sharp knives loose in a drawer. Banging around in a drawer dull the edge of the knives. Also, someone might reach into the drawer and come out with a handful of blood.
- If you drop your knife - stand back and let it fall, don't try to catch it. Instinct will tell you to catch it, but, don't.
- Don't toss a dirty knife in the dishwasher. Reaching into dirty dishwasher will certainly be more dangerous when knives are hidden. Wash the knives separately.

Meat Slicer Safety Tips:

Lack of training, poor work procedures, improper use of guards, and cleaning the blades without protective gloves are a few of the contributing factors.

- Provide written safe work procedures and training for each worker who uses a meat slicer.
- Use guards and glides at all time.
- Secure meat properly in the slicer, and ensure that the slicer is in the proper setting before cutting.
- Never reach across the blade.
- Turn the slicer off after use, setting the calibration back to zero.
- Unplug the slicer before cleaning it.
- Use cut-resistant gloves (metal, chain-male gauntlet) on both hands while cleaning the blade.



* National Safety Council 2002 *Injury Facts*