



CLOVER SAFE

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



#49

DRILL PRESS SAFETY

Clover Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and members nine years and older.

According to U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission data, approximately 2,700 people received hospital treatment for power drill injuries during 2006. Most injuries involved lacerations and punctures to fingers and hands. Other injuries included corneal abrasions, foreign bodies in the eye, and hand and finger contusions. Most of these drill press injuries were due to operator error or inattention and could have been avoided.



Photograph Courtesy of the University of California 4-H Archives

Pre-Use Activities

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the drill press operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Before using, always inspect the drill press for damage or disrepair. In addition, assure both the drill press chuck and spindle are functioning properly and inspect the electrical cord and plug.
- If the drill press fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use until it can be repaired.

Operating Precautions

- Always wear safety glasses or goggles when using a drill press.
- Never wear gloves, a tie, loose clothing, a watch, rings, or jewelry when using a drill press. Tie long hair back or secure under a cap.
- Support the underside of the stock to be drilled.
- Center punch the drill-hole location.
- Use a clamp or vise to securely fasten the stock to the drill press table. Never attempt to hand-hold stock while drilling.
- Insert bit into drill chuck and tighten with the chuck key. Remove chuck key from the drill chuck before starting the drill press.
- Make all drill press adjustments with the power shut off.
- Keep hands and fingers at least two inches from rotating drill bits.
- Turn the drill press off before looking up or away from the work piece being drilled.
- When drilling metal, use cutting oil to lubricate the bit.
- Do not exceed the recommended speeds for the type and size of drill bit being used or composition of the stock being drilled.
- When drilling deep holes, frequently raise the drill bit from the hole to remove cuttings and cool the bit
- Never stop the rotation of the drill chuck and spindle with your hands or fingers.
- If a drill bit binds, turn off the drill press and carefully turn drill chuck backwards by hand to free the drill bit.
- Always clean the drill press table and work area upon completion of the drilling task.
- If you are injured by a drill press, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.