

# Work Crew Safety Manual

## I. Introduction

Safety is everybody's concern and is always an important consideration at any construction site. Building construction can be one of the most dangerous occupations. Everyone must pay particular attention to safety. Try to be conscious of the safety of others as well as yourself. An observer can often see danger better than the worker involved in the project. Be cautious at all times and ask questions. Do not go ahead with a task if you are uncertain how it is done, or if you feel uncomfortable doing it.

Safety is based on knowledge, skill and an attitude of care and concern. Members of the Housing Recovery staff team should instruct each worker about the correct and proper procedures for performing each task. This should familiarize the worker with the potential hazards of doing the tasks and advise him or her as to how such hazards can be minimized or eliminated. It is very important that we at Back Bay Mission know about safe work practices and follow them.

## II. Guidelines for a safe attitude

- THINK before you do your work or task.
- If you are uncertain about how to do a task or how to operate a power tool—ASK A MEMBER OF THE HOUSING RECOVERY STAFF TEAM OR DESIGNATED PERSON IN YOUR GROUP.
- Concentrate on your task and eliminate distractions.
- Know where the first-aid kit is located and how to get emergency help.
- Inspect all power tools, hand tools, ladders and scaffolding on a daily basis.
- Advise a member of the housing recovery staff team or designated safety monitor in your group IMMEDIATELY of any unsafe or hazardous tool or condition.

## III. Proper safety equipment

Proper clothing is as essential to safety as the proper selection and use of tools. Wear clothes and gloves that are appropriate for the work and weather conditions. Loose clothing is dangerous around power tools.

Volunteers shall wear work boots or thick-soled shoes at all times when on a construction site. Any volunteer wearing sandals or other types of inappropriate footwear shall not be permitted to be on a construction site.

Hard hats must be worn while doing demolition work, or when required by a member of the housing recovery staff team or designated safety monitor, and are to be made available to each volunteer as necessary.

Protective glasses are available for every volunteer. A volunteer must wear protective glasses any time he or she is operating a power tool or when instructed to do so by a member of the housing recovery staff.

Each volunteer must wear a dust mask when installing insulation, sanding or when instructed by a member of the housing recovery staff.

Ear plugs must be worn when using a power tool for a prolonged period of time or when instructed by a member of the housing recovery staff. Ear plugs are to be made available to volunteers on each job site at all times.

## **IV. Power tools and other electrical equipment**

A power tool should not be used without proper instruction on its use and on what can happen if the tool is not used properly. The instruction should be done by a qualified person and should be given to all volunteers; even experienced do-it-yourselfers should receive instruction. The trainee should use the power tool in the presence of the instructor, until the instructor is satisfied that the trainee knows how to use the power tool properly.

Never lower or carry a power tool by its cord. Clean tools daily. Power tools should be checked for proper operation, defective switches, cords, plugs and proper grounding. Defective tools should not be used and should either be reported to a member of the housing recovery staff team or labeled and brought to the tool room for repair immediately. (Do not wait until the end of the day.)

### **A. To avoid electrical shock, the following rules must be obeyed:**

- A three-pronged plug must be used on all electric power tools.
- Extension cords must not have frayed insulation or be fastened with staples, hung from nails or suspended from wires.
- All temporary lights must be equipped with non-conductive guards.

## **V. Hand tools**

Always select the correct type and size of tool for your work and be sure it is sharp and properly adjusted. Do not use any tool if the handle is loose or in poor condition. Dull tools are hazardous to use because excessive force must be used to make them cut. Oil or dirt on a tool may cause it to slip and cause an injury. When using tools, hold them correctly. Most edged tools should be held in both hands with the cutting action away from yourself. Avoid using your hand or fingers as a guide to start a cut, but if it is necessary, use extreme caution.

Handle and carry tools with care. Keep edged and pointed tools turned downward. Carry only a few tools at one time unless they are mounted in a special holder or carried in a tool belt. Anyone working with a hammer at a height should wear a hammer loop or tool belt, and, when not in use, the hammer should be kept in the loop or belt and not placed on a sloping surface or in a precarious position. Do not carry sharp tools in your pockets. When not in use, tools should be kept in special boxes, chests, or cabinets.

## **VI. Ladders**

Inspect a ladder before you use it. Look for wear and tear, loose rungs and defects. If the ladder is unsafe, don't use it.

Use a ladder that will reach the work. An extension ladder should reach 3 feet above the work level. Move your ladder with your work. If both of your shoulders are extended outside the ladder while you are working, you are reaching too far. When using an extension ladder, use the "4-to-1" rule: For every 4 feet of height, move the bottom of the ladder 1 foot away from the wall. A ladder is pitched at the proper, safe angle if you can grasp a rung at shoulder height.

Place your ladder on solid footing. If there is a danger of the ladder moving while you work, tie it down. If there is a danger that the ladder will be hit, barricade it. If the feet of the ladder are not level, dig the ground out under one foot with the claw of a hammer rather than raise one foot with blocks.

Never use an aluminum ladder in the vicinity of electrical lines and never use a ladder outdoors during inclement weather or on very windy days.

Carry tools and materials in proper carrying devices and keep your hands free for climbing. When climbing, always face the ladder.

## **VII. Scaffolding**

All scaffolding that is elevated 10 feet or more must be equipped with a safety railing. All scaffolds must be equipped with a toeboard to eliminate the possibility that tools or debris will be kicked or pushed onto people below. A scaffold must be designed to support four times the weight of those working on it and the materials resting on it. Scaffolding components that are not designed to be compatible should not be mixed.

Inspect all scaffolding each day before using it. Never use damaged or defective equipment and avoid rusted parts since their strength is unknown. When erecting scaffolding, provide adequate sills for the scaffold posts and use base plates. Use adjusting screws, not blocks, when on an uneven grade. Make sure to plumb and level scaffolding and do not force end braces when constructing the scaffolding.

Many scaffolding accidents are caused by defective planking. Use only properly graded and inspected lumber for planking. Inspect planking daily for splits and knots, and remove defective or damaged planking.

## **VIII. Clean work site**

A clean work place is a safe work place. This refers to the neatness and good order of the construction site. Maintaining good housekeeping contributes to the efficiency of the worker and is important in preventing accidents.

Position building materials and supplies in carefully laid out piles to allow adequate aisles and walkways. Clean up all rubbish and scrap materials on a daily basis. Do not permit blocks of wood, nails, bolts, empty cans, pipe, wire or other materials to accumulate on the work site. They interfere with work and can constitute a hazard. Keep tools and equipment that are not being used in chests, panels or tool boxes. This protects the tools and the workers. Never leave a work site unguarded unless all tools and materials have been properly secured.

## **IX. Poisons and toxic substances**

The poisons and toxic substances that can be found most often on a work site are asbestos, lead oxides, solvents and animal feces. Special care must be taken when you come in contact with any of these substances or any unfamiliar substance.

If you discover asbestos fiber being used as pipe, boiler or heating duct insulation, contact a member of the housing recovery staff immediately. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE ASBESTOS FIBER ON YOUR OWN.**

Scraping exterior woodwork, demolishing lead-painted walls and stripping old mill work are the principal ways that volunteers can be exposed to lead chips, dust and particles. Contact a member of the housing recovery staff immediately if you discover any lead-painted surfaces.

Masks are the best protection against breathing germs that can be borne in dust containing animal feces (such as rodent droppings).

## **I. Emergency medical care**

If someone is injured on the job, contact a member of the housing recovery staff team immediately and summon any needed medical help (9-1-1). You also should use the supplies located in the first-aid kit to stabilize the injury as much as possible until medical help arrives. Employees of the housing recovery team are trained in first-aid.

## **II. Use of Drugs & Alcohol:**

No illegal drugs are permitted on Back Bay Mission's campus or other lodging sites of Back Bay Mission volunteer groups. No illegal drugs are permitted on the work sites of Back Bay Mission. Use of such substances by any volunteer shall result in the immediate dismissal of the person using such substances from any involvement in Mission programs and from the Mission property.

Volunteer groups who lodge on Back Bay Mission's property may consume alcoholic beverages on Back Bay Mission property only during hours following the completion of volunteer service for the day. No alcohol may be consumed at any time during the provision of volunteer service and labor. Appropriate decorum and reasonable, legal limitations of alcohol consumption will be observed at all times by volunteers "after hours". Failure to comply with this policy will result in the termination of a volunteer's stay with Back Bay Mission.

Minors are strictly prohibited from any alcohol consumption at all times and in all circumstances.