

Use of fixed blade knives prohibited on POST sites

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The POST committee and participating oil companies have adopted the use of auto or self retractable knives only. These knives have blades that automatically retract into the handle when not in use.

Many workers use utility knives to cut strapping, puncture shrinkwrap and open packaging. But one wrong move and these retractable blades can do serious harm.

Many accidents involving utility knives occur for the following reasons:

- Drawing the knife towards you instead of away from your body.
- Working with a dull blade. (Dull blades require more pressure, increasing the potential for injury.)
- Trying to cut more than the knife can handle.
- Improperly storing the knife with the blade extended.
- Failing to wear personal protective equipment.
- Neglecting to inspect the tool before use.

There have been cases where workers have suffered injuries from exposed blade tips. This is because the blades did not completely retract into the handle.

The following are safety precautions to keep in mind when performing any cutting activity:

- Wear safety glasses to protect your eyes
- Wear metal mesh or Kevlar gloves to protect your hands.
- Using self-retracting blades.
- Keep extremities out of the cutting path.
- Don't apply too much pressure on the blade.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions when changing blades.
- Dispose of dull or broken blades in a puncture-resistant container.
- Use scissor-like tools when cutting rope, plastic tubing, or flexible plastic pipe
- Focus on avoiding blades, use a scissors/shears type cutting device like these

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