

 <b>DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY</b>  <b>Safe Work Instructions for Reciprocating Saws</b>	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Assistant Vice President Facilities Management	<i>Approval Date:</i> January 2010
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Facilities Management	<i>Revisions:</i> January 2017
<i>Service:</i> Trade Services		<i>Shop:</i> Carpentry

**Hazards Identified:**

Saw or cord damage, improperly locked blade, wrong amperage extension cord, using an ungrounded outlet, hand slipping on hand grip, vibration, noise, hot hand grip, worn blades, breaking blades, flying projectiles, pinch points, equipment sparking, contact with energized power cables, exposure to dust, over exertion in maintaining cutting rate.

**Personal Protective Equipment Required:**

Safety boots, hard hat, safety goggles or safety glasses with side shields or a face shield, hearing protection, long trousers, safety gloves, dust mask

**Training Required:**

Before using this type of equipment employees must be trained by a competent person in its proper use and care. The operator's manual, tool safety markings and instructions for manufacturer approved attachments must be reviewed regularly. Employees must also be trained in the proper use and maintenance of all required PPE.

These safe work practices must be followed at all times and are to be reviewed annually.

## **Pre-operation Checklist**

1. Only properly trained and qualified employees are allowed to use this saw.
2. Only have this saw serviced by qualified competent service people.
3. Do not use this saw if you are under the influence of drugs, alcohol or medication or if you are overly tired.
4. Keep work area free of debris and other hazards.
5. Keep other employees and bystanders away from the area where you are cutting.
6. Always inspect the saw and power cord for damage before starting to work.
7. Always check extension cords for damage and to verify they are adequate to handle the saw amperage.
8. Use a ground fault circuit interrupter outlet when ever possible.
9. Inspect outlets to ensure they match the saw being used.
10. Do not operate this saw near flammables or in a potentially explosive atmosphere.

## **Installing or Changing Blades**

1. Always unplug the saw before installing or changing blades or making any adjustments.
2. Always point the saw away from your body.
3. Rotate blade clamp collar to release position.
4. Insert the blade shank from the front of the saw.
5. Rotate the blade clamp collar to the lock position to lock the blade in place.
6. Always use sharp blades.
7. Always use the proper blade for the job.

8. Always clean the spindle and blade clamp when changing a blade to ensure the blade will be held securely in place.
9. Always use the shortest blade possible for the job but one that will extend beyond the far side of the item being cut through out the stroke.
10. When cutting metal be sure to choose a blade that will have at least three teeth in contact with the metal at all times.
11. Only use clean blades in order to reduce friction.
12. Use a fine blade for ferrous metals and a course blade for non-ferrous materials.

### **Operation**

1. Before cutting know what is inside or on the other side of the item being cut.
2. If you must cut into wall or other areas where there may be wiring, water pipes or gas lines ensure they shut off and completely disconnected before starting to work.
3. Before beginning to cut ensure that all extension cords are clear of the cutting area.
4. Always grasp the under side of the hand grip and the rear handle. Do not try to operate this saw with one hand.
5. Before attempting to cut any material ensure that it is firmly anchored or clamped in place to prevent slipping.
6. Ensure the blade is placed lightly against item to be cut.
7. Ensure that the adjustable shoe is firmly against the item to be cut.
8. Always allow saw to come to full speed before applying pressure to begin cutting.
9. Use extreme caution when cutting overhead. Be on the alert for unseen cables, pipes, gas lines, etc.
10. Always try to cut out a piece of ceiling large enough to allow a better visual check of the area before continuing to cut.

11. Always try to anticipate the direction of falling material when working overhead so that it can be avoided.
12. Support large pieces that are being cut to avoid jamming the blade.
13. Avoid cutting small pieces that can't be held securely in place.
14. Always position yourself so that you can maintain full control of the saw.
15. Keep your hands away from the blade and shoe.
16. Never hold the item to be cut in your hand or against your leg.
17. Do not overreach. Maintain a solid footing and good balance at all times while operating saw.
18. Always hold the shoe firmly against the item being cut in order to maintain control of the saw.
19. Remain alert to the possibility of the blade binding.
20. Never attempt to force the saw.
21. Always allow the saw to come to a complete stop before attempting to remove it from an unfinished cut.
22. Ensure solid contact between the rear of the shoe and the item being cut when plunge cutting. Use the shoe as a pivot and slowly raise the handle of the saw to work the blade into the item.
23. Never plunge cut into metal, always use a drill to make a pilot hole for the saw.
24. Switch the saw off after use and disconnect from the power source.
25. Inspect the blade from time to time during use and replace worn or damaged blades.
26. Allow the blade to cool before removing from the saw.
27. Always keep a moving blade away from your body.
28. Take regular breaks or share the operation of this saw to avoid injuries due to vibration.
29. Limit the total period of daily use by one operator.

30. Ensure the work area is properly ventilated if cutting is performed for extended periods of time and considerable dust is being generated.
31. Use respiration protection if and when required.
32. If this saw breaks down or malfunctions in any way tag it with a "Do not use." Tag and remove it from service immediately. Report the problem to your supervisor.