



KCA TOOL BOX TALK: Utility Knife Safety

A utility knife is a very common tool used on any job site and, unfortunately, causes US companies to spend more than \$300 million dollars each year on just hand lacerations alone, according to OSHA. Many accidents caused by utility knives occur due to dull blades, cutting towards yourself, storing the knife with blade extended, using too much force/pressure, not wearing PPE, and the knife slipping out of the hand or tossing it to a coworker.

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Utility Knife Safety Tips:

- ✓ Use utility knives with self-retracting blades when possible
- ✓ Check to make sure the blade completely retracts into the handle after each use and before putting it back into your pocket
- ✓ Wear cut-resistant gloves with non-slip palms/fingers and safety glasses
- ✓ Only use sharp/unbroken blades that are the proper size/type and replace defective retraction mechanisms (follow manufacturer's instructions)
- ✓ Let the blade cut without excessive force and make sure you are not trying to cut more than the knife can handle at one time
- ✓ Do not hand a knife to someone with the blade in the "open position" (pass with handle first if you must give it to someone while blade is exposed)
- ✓ Make sure the blade is locked in place before using
- ✓ Avoid disposable utility knives with breakaway blades as they are not meant for heavy use
- ✓ Use a puncture resistant container or carefully wrap blade up in tape or paper when disposing of dull or broken blades
- ✓ Do not use the blade as a pry bar; it will break and cause injury
- ✓ Do not try to stop a falling knife as you will more likely hurt yourself than the ground

For more information visit OSHA REGULATIONS: 1926.301