

## Young Woodworker's Fingertips Amputated by Saw – "It took my hand with it"

**Industry:** Residential building

**Occupation:** Wood product assembler

**Task:** Cutting boards with a table saw

A 22-year-old wood product assembler was cutting boards with a table saw when a big piece of the board got jammed in the blade.

It was not the first time this jamming happened. Although he should have turned off the saw, his supervisor told him not to stop it too often. He tried to remove the piece of wood just like he did before. "I figured as long I was careful I can be fine, I was wrong," he said, "It took my hand with it." Two of his fingertips were amputated.

At the time of the incident, the employee had been working full time for the company for almost eight months. He did not receive any formal safety training or demonstration of any safety procedures when he was hired except some operator manuals. When he returned to work, he did not receive any extra safety training on how to use the table saw.

### Resources

- Know more about power saw injuries and get safety tips provided by the American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH) at:  
[www.assh.org/Public/HandConditions/Pages/PowerSawInjuries.aspx](http://www.assh.org/Public/HandConditions/Pages/PowerSawInjuries.aspx)
- Machine Safety on Using Saws and Cutting Heads from L&I:  
[www.lni.wa.gov/WISHA/Rules/machine\\_safety/HTML/296-806-480-2.htm](http://www.lni.wa.gov/WISHA/Rules/machine_safety/HTML/296-806-480-2.htm)
- Safe Work with Power Saws:  
[www.cpwr.com/sites/default/files/publications/kfsaws.PDF](http://www.cpwr.com/sites/default/files/publications/kfsaws.PDF)
- A guide for protecting workers from woodworking hazards:  
[www.osha.gov/publications/osh3157.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/publications/osh3157.pdf)



An example of a table saw with unguarded blade

### Fact

Workers less than 24-year-old have the highest risk of occupational hand and finger trauma.<sup>1</sup>

### Employer Requirements

- Guard hand-fed circular saw with a hood. See WAC 296-806-48012.
- Protect employees using saws and cutting heads. See WAC 296-806-48002.
- Employers must inform employees about hazards through training, labels, alarms, color-coded systems, chemical information sheets and other methods.

### Recommendations

- Read and follow the instructions in the operator's manual.
- Wear gloves to protect hands but not when working near rotating parts. Always wear eye and face protection.
- Never use a saw with an unguarded saw blade that can cause serious injuries.
- Talk to your supervisor if you do not feel safe using any of the tools at work.
- Contact LNI about your workplace rights at 360-902-6041 or [TeenSafety@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:TeenSafety@Lni.wa.gov)

### Need more information?

Contact Wendy Lu, epidemiologist at 360.902.6729 or email

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<sup>1</sup> Sorock GS, Lobardi DA, Courtney TK et al. Epidemiology of occupational acute traumatic hand injuries: a literature review. Safety Science. 2001;38:241-256.

Photo source:  
<http://www.elcosh.org/image/660/i000701/701.html>