

## Safety First Practices – General

TAW's *Safety First Practices* is a collection of those practices which the Association believes are generally accepted by reasonable and knowledgeable practitioners of the craft of turning as contributing to the safety of individuals participating in or observing the practice of the craft. ***It is inherent in the fluid nature of the Craft of Turning, and its ancillary practices and technology, that such a collection of material will always be incomplete and in flux. As such it must be considered a guide to safe turning and not the last word on the subject. Turning and many of its ancillary activities are inherently dangerous and the Association Board of Directors, Officers, Safety Committee, and Members make no warranties or assurances that following these recommendations will eliminate all risk of injury.*** First and foremost to safety is the practice of using good judgement. You are responsible for your own Safety as well as that of those around you.

### Preparedness

Know yourself, your skills, and your tools. The use of power tools in general is inherently dangerous, take the time to learn the correct use of tools and techniques from someone experienced. Experienced individuals are capable of using materials, techniques, and procedures not recommended for beginners.

Practice good judgement at all times. If it does not feel right, STOP! Does not look right, STOP! Does not sound right, STOP! Or if it seems too dangerous, STOP! Think it through again.

Do not use power tools when you are distracted or too tired to focus on what you are attempting to do. Walk away and return when you are better prepared to work safely.

It is never safe to use power tools when you are under the influence of alcohol or other substances which impair you physically or mentally.

### Attire

Wear a faceshield or safety goggles as appropriate to the work being performed. Use only those rated for the type of high impact incidents which can and do occur while working wood with power tools. Clean either daily with appropriate materials.

If you wear contacts use safety goggles under the shield to keep dust away from your eyes. If you wear glasses they should be made safety rated.

Wear hearing protection when using power tools, pneumatic tools, chainsaws, etc.

Wear close fitting clothes with short sleeves or long sleeves with tight cuffs.

Wear protective footwear – opened toed shoes and sandals/flip-flops are not suitable. Wear steel toed boots when working with large blocks of wood or moving heavy equipment.

Wear a lift belt when lifting heavy objects and use correct lifting posture.

Jewelry and watches should not be worn when using power tools or any other equipment with moving parts or exposed electrical components. This includes rings. Consider designating a specific - secure – spot and develop the habit of placing all jewelry there when you enter the shop.

Long hair should be tied back or covered in a manner that will prevent it from being caught by moving parts or material. Nor should it be loose enough to be a distraction.

## Environment

Install fire detector(s) of the heat sensing type (Regular smoke detectors sense fine sanding dust as smoke). Add a carbon monoxide detector if you use a wood stove.

Place a fire extinguisher by the exit. It should be rated for electrical fires.

Hang an appropriately stocked First Aid Kit in a central and easily accessible location. Tape a list of emergency numbers to the front. This is also a great place for a cell phone holder.

Install an ambient air filtering system, one which filters to the micron level if possible.

Keep the clutter to a minimum – it's more efficient as well as safer.

Keep the floor free of trip hazards – this includes wood, extension cords, air hoses, and vacuum hoses.

Reduce ambient noise by installing dust collection, vacuum, and compressed air units in a separate area or sound baffled cabinets.

Use of anti-fatigue mats is recommended.

## Storage

Store dry wood away from heat sources. Including sparks from grinders.

Store flammables in a grounded metal cabinet. All the better if it is a fire rated cabinet.

Arrange safe storage for sharp tools that are in use as well as those not in use.

## Electrical

Wiring should be adequate to the needs of the shop, the individual equipment, and to code. Inadequate wiring is a fire and shock hazard.

Install sufficient outlets and drop cords to eliminate the need for extension cords – especially across the floor.

If you must use an extension cord make certain that it is rated for what you are doing and free of defects.

## Lighting

Overall lighting should be bright enough to easily find small items dropped on the floor.

Fluorescent lighting is acceptable but should be shielded with plastic tubes made for that purpose. Additional shielding with a metal grid is advisable for lighting directly over a lathe.

There should be at least one window for natural light and for observing the passage of time.

### Cleanliness

Take time to clean up shavings and sawdust, and put away tools at the end of the day.

### Distractions

Visitors should wait to be acknowledged before approaching or speaking. Don't forget to place them in a safe situation if you are going to work while they are present.

### Sharpening

Keep tools sharp and clean for better and safer performance.

Bench grinders are fitted with guards on the wheels and spark shields. These should always be in place and correctly adjusted.

Grinding wheels can – and sometimes do – disintegrate in use. Wear a faceshield when using a grinder.

Fine particles from a grinder are harmful to your respiratory system. Use a dust mask, air filtration helmet, proper ventilation, dust collection system, or a combination of these to deal with this serious issue.

The area around your bench grinder should be kept clear of shavings and dust to prevent ignition from sparks while sharpening.

Use of adequate lighting while sharpening will improve your sharpening and reduce the risk injury to your hands.

### Dust

Wood dust is harmful to your respiratory system. Use a dust mask, air filtration helmet, proper ventilation, dust collection system, or a combination of these to deal with this serious issue. Be especially mindful of dust from many exotic woods, spalted woods, or any wood from which you notice a skin or respiratory reaction. Visitors should also be provided dust protection.

Dust extraction machinery may only be capable of capturing some of the wood dust you generate. Some dust may either not be captured by the extraction port or may be too fine to be trapped by the filter. Ensure your extraction equipment is adequate for the task in hand.

Ambient air filters are designed to continually filter the air in the whole workshop. This may be effective overall but may not be adequate to remove the dust from the point of generation quickly enough to prevent you breathing a lot of it in.

## Finishing

Obtain, READ, and HEED information in Safety Data Sheets for finish products and other materials you use.

Rags should be placed in a lidded metal container of water after using them to apply finish. If this is not available spread them out – away from other flammables and ignition sources to dry.

If you use paper goods to apply finish place them in a metal container with water and a tight fitting lid.