Portable Tools: Circular Saw Requirements

Department: Chemical and General Safety
Program: Portable Tools
Owner: Program Manager, Jim Healy
Authority: ES&H Manual, Chapter 25, Portable Tools

Use of circular saws must meet the following requirements, in addition to those found in Portable Tools: Electric Power Tool Requirements.[1]

Note *Always visually inspect tools before use and remove any found to be defective from service.*

Do

1. Wear safety glasses or a face shield.
2. Wear an approved respirator or dust mask when exposed to harmful or nuisance dusts.
3. Use appropriate hearing protection equipment in noisy areas.
4. Select the correct blade for stock being cut and allow it to cut steadily. Do not force it.
5. Ensure that the blade that you have selected is sharp enough to do the job. Sharp blades work better and are safer.
6. Set the depth of the blade, while the saw is unplugged, and lock it at a depth so that the lowest tooth does not extend more than about 0.3 cm or 1/8” beneath the wood.
7. Check the retracting lower blade guard to make certain it works freely. It should enclose the teeth as completely as possible, and cover the unused portion of the blade when cutting.
8. Check that the retracting lower blade guard has returned to its starting position before laying down the saw.
9. Keep upper and retracting lower blade guard clean and free of sawdust.
10. Check the saw for proper blade rotation.
11. Keep all cords clear of cutting area.
12. Secure work being cut to avoid movement.
13. Use two hands to operate saws - one on a trigger switch and on the manufacturer-supplied hand-hold.
14. Circular saws are designed for right-hand operation; left-handed operation will demand more care to operate safely.
15. Disconnect power supply or unplug the saw before adjusting or changing the blade.

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1 Portable Tools: Electric Power Tool Requirements (SLAC-I-730-0A21S-028), http://www-group.slac.stanford.edu/esh/eshmanual/references/toolsReqElectric.pdf

16. Allow the saw to reach full power before starting to cut.
17. Keep the motor free from accumulation of dust and chips.

Do Not

1. Do not carry the saw with a finger on the trigger switch.
2. Do not hold or force the retracting lower guard in the open position.
3. Do not place hand under the shoe or guard of the saw.
4. Do not over tighten the blade-locking nut.
5. Do not twist the saw to change, cut, or check alignment.
6. Do not use a saw that vibrates or appears unsafe in any way.
7. Do not force the saw during cutting.
8. Do not cut materials without first checking for obstructions or other objects such as nails and screws.
9. Do not overreach. Keep proper footing and balance.
10. Do not rip stock without using a wedge or guide clamped or nailed to the stock.