



Company Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

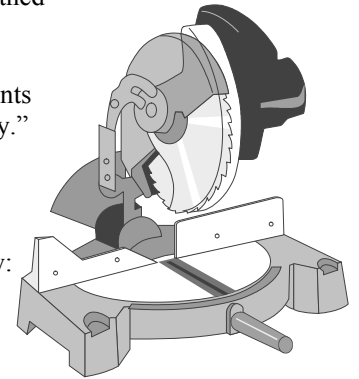
Topic 249: Chop Saws

Introduction: Miter cut-off saws are commonly known as “Chop Saws” to craftsmen everywhere. This versatile tool is used primarily by trim and finish carpenters and cabinetmakers. Sometimes, high performance framing crews will have a chop saw on the job. The most common version seen on building projects has a 10 inch blade, although they come much bigger. Besides cutting any wood products, chop saws will cut vinyl and aluminum and plumbers use them to cut plastic ABS and PVC pipe. These great little saws are extremely portable and speed up any cutting processes. However, their high RPM speeds, combined with a fine-toothed carbide steel tipped blade, is a powerful piece of machinery that must be treated with careful respect. Safe work practices must be implemented and used in order to avoid serious injury.

OSHA regulations state that “All woodworking tools and machinery shall meet the applicable requirements of American National Standards Institute (ANSI), O1.1 – 1961, Safety Code for Woodworking Machinery.”

Follow these safety guidelines when using a miter cut-off (chop) saw:

- **Do not ever**, under any circumstances, allow anyone to use a chop saw that has not been properly instructed and approved in the processes of its safe operation.
- **Prior to its use**, do a visual and operational inspection to ensure safe mechanical function of the saw:
 - * **Make certain** all blade guards are in place and working smoothly. Removing or pinning back guards is not only extremely hazardous; it is considered a serious safety violation.
 - * **Check the blade** to be sure that it is straight and the arbor bolt is tight.
 - * **Ensure** the “constant-pressure” trigger switch operates properly.
 - * **Check that** the electrical cords, plugs, and fittings are intact and secure. Frayed cords are not permissible.
 - * **Be sure that** arbor wrenches or keys were not inadvertently left behind on the machine during a blade change.
- **When setting-up** the cutting station, it is important that the saw is positioned in a manner that the work piece’s point of contact with the cutting edge can be easily viewed without straining or stooping.
- **Make sure the work-zone** is level and free of trip hazards such as tangled power cords, cluttered material piles, scraps, stones, bricks, or other obstacles and obstructions. Avoid unsafe distractions by setting up away from high traffic areas.
- **Ensure the saw’s table** or platform being used is stable and doesn’t wobble. Be sure that accessory benches (for cutting long stock) are steady and sturdy; get assistance when needed.
- **During cuts**, keep blade speeds at recommended levels; over-pressure on cuts will create hazardous situations.
- **Hearing protection** is required due to the extreme sonic and acoustical levels generated, especially during extended cutting.
- **Eye protection** must always be worn when using a chop saw.
- **Depending on** the material being cut, a dust mask may be required.
- **Wear clothing appropriate** with chop saw use; avoid long, loose shirtsleeves, neckwear, or untied long hair.
- **If any operational problems** are noted, remove the saw from service and get it repaired immediately.
- **Proper care and maintenance** should always be given the saw. Damage usually occurs during careless transport, handling, and storage of the tool.
- **Allow only** qualified personnel to make repairs to the saw.



Conclusion: Chop saws are an excellent accessory to any woodworking operation. But if good sense and caution are not used, a 10 inch carbide tipped blade doing ten thousand RPM can result in serious injury. To avoid hazardous situations, follow these safety guidelines.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Employee Signatures: _____
(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

Foreman/Supervisor’s Signature: _____

These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.