

Sample Hazard Assessment Form

Production Activities

Task Description	Hazard Type	PPE*
Banding/un-banding packages/pallets	Cutting, Slicing	1
Utilizing sharp tools/materials: utility knives, X-Acto blades, shears, embroidery needles	Cutting, Slicing, Puncturing	2

Pre-Production Activities

Task Description	Hazard Type	PPE*
Utilizing sharp tools/materials: utility knives, X-Acto blades, shears, installing embroider needles	Cutting, Puncturing, Slicing	2

Post-Production Activities

Task Description	Hazard Type	PPE*
Utilizing sharp tools/materials: utility knives, X-Acto blades, shears	Cutting, Slicing	2
Banding/un-banding packages/pallets	Cutting, Slicing	1

Shipping & Receiving Activities

Task Description	Hazard Type	PPE*
Utilizing sharp tools/materials: utility knives, X-Acto blades, shears	Cutting, Slicing	3
Banding/un-banding packages/pallets	Cutting, Slicing	1

Maintenance Activities

Task Description	Hazard Type	PPE*
Operating power tools — grinding, machining, cutting	Cutting, Slicing	2
Utilizing sharp tools/materials: utility knives, X-Acto blades, shears, embroidery needles	Cutting, Puncture Slicing	3

* PPE

- 1 – Leather Gloves
- 2 – Kevlar/Aramid Fiber Gloves
- 3 – Metal-mesh Gloves

SHARPS SAFETY

Protect Yourself

- Use safety gloves when cutting
- Use a stable surface where possible
- Always cut away from your body
- Retract blades, store knives in protective sleeves, and box loose razors when not in use
- Never carry open blades or razor blades
- Never use dull tools
- Always dispose of blades in proper waste sharp containers

Introduction

Within any imaging facility you will find physical and health hazards and both need to be addressed in order to protect your employees.

As a first step, employers need to conduct a hazard assessment of the entire facility and operation to determine if hazards are present and to determine what is required to eliminate or reduce the exposure of those hazards to employees.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to first attempt engineering or work practice controls to manage or eliminate hazards when possible. If those measures are not feasible, as a last resort, OSHA allows employers to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for employee protection.

PPE is protective equipment and/or clothing such as gloves, safety glasses and shoes that when worn by an employee will minimize exposure to hazards that could cause serious injuries and illnesses.

If PPE is elected, as a last resort, employers are required to conduct a PPE hazard assessment to properly identify and select the right PPE.

This pamphlet focuses on hand protection when working with sharp tools and components.

The information in this guide is only for instructional purposes and does not constitute a complete PPE hazard assessment.

Sharps

The term sharps in our industry refers to items such as X-Acto blades, razor blades, box cutters, utility knives and needles. In our industry these items are considered tools used to cut and trim substrates, scrape material, cut packing straps and open boxes, or equipment parts that can puncture the skin such as sewing needles for embroidery machines.

Whether it's for precision work, rough work or production, care is needed in using, storing and disposing of these sharps.

Hazards with Sharps

Physical hazards are present when handling and working with sharps and potential for serious injury is great if proper protection is not used.

Potential hazards include abrasions, cuts, amputations and punctures.

Sharp objects that can slice, cut, poke or puncture can also have risk of biologic hazards such as blood or other potentially infected material.

For proper protection to be established, a safety program needs to be in place which addresses existing and potential sharp hazards.

In our industry such a program involves a combination of proper work practices and proper PPE selection through the PPE Hazard Assessment.

Hazard Assessment and Selection

A PPE hazard assessment regarding sharps must look at the following elements:

- Review what tasks and operations use sharps
- Identify what type of sharps are used
- Determine if there are safer alternatives.
- Examine how the employee performs their tasks with sharps
- Identify the existing and potential hazards
- Investigate the different types of safety gloves available and make the selections that provide the best protection for the hazard.

PPE hazard assessments must be documented through a certification.

In general, safety gloves made from metal mesh, leather or canvas provides protection against cuts, punctures and amputations. Fiber design can include Kevlar and aramid.

The nature of the hazard and the operation involved will affect the selection of gloves.

A sample PPE hazard assessment is shown at the end of this pamphlet.

Work Practice Assessment

The first best practice regarding sharps is proper training. Employers must train each employee on the proper use of the tools they are provided as well as the PPE provided which includes:

- When the PPE is necessary
- What PPE is necessary
- How to properly put on, take off and adjust the PPE
- Limitations of the PPE
- Proper care, maintenance, useful life and disposal of PPE
- Other safe practices with sharps include:
 - Sheathing knives when not in use
 - Properly stored/boxed razor blades
 - Limited use for breakaway blades
- Restrictions of where and when authorized sharps are permitted
- Replacing dull sharps/tools
- Policies that require cutting away from the body and not cutting moving materials

Proper Sharp Disposal

It's important to note that injuries also occur from careless disposal of sharps. An unsuspecting person can find a misplaced sharp or get injured when reaching into the trash.

For proper disposal, place waste sharps into a plastic or metal container with a secured cover and which is labeled "Warning — Waste Sharps".

These sealed containers should be acceptable for the trash, but always check with your local waste hauler for any restrictions.