

# OHBA Safety Pages: Handheld Auger Safety

A power auger, whether one-man or two-man, may be the fastest route between you and a hole in the ground that needs drilling. But a mistake when using one doesn't auger well for your health.



- **Call before you dig!** Perhaps the biggest blunder is failing to call 811 ahead of time to check for buried utilities. The biggest hazard when using a post hole auger by far is posed by underground power and gas lines.
- **Read the manual.** Not knowing how to quickly turn off the auger can be devastating during an emergency. Familiarize yourself with all controls before starting.
- **Wear appropriate PPE.** Wear eye and hearing protection, gloves and sturdy boots.
- **Choose the correct type.** You'll have to choose between a two- or one-person power auger head, as well as select the correctly sized auger itself. Auger drills are interchangeable and come in 4-, 6-, 8- or 12-in. diameters. Remember, the larger the diameter, the tougher it is to handle the machine. If you're boring more than just a few holes, you're better off with the more powerful two-person machine.
- **Dig a pilot hole** to keep the auger tip from wandering when you start the post hole auger.
- **Watch what you wear.** Loose clothing can get caught in the spinning bit, with potentially deadly consequences. And check to make sure there is no loose material on the ground, such as landscape fabric, that can get tangled in the shaft or can pull you in and tangle you up in the shaft.
- **Counteract the torque.** Operators should brace their left side near the left handles.
- **Use your legs.** You'll be constantly wrestling with this powerful machine while digging. It's a common mistake to overuse back muscles. Lift and absorb shock with your legs.
- **Not too deep.** Be sure not to dig too deep without cleaning the dirt out of the hole. If you go deeper than 12 in. or so, the auger will be extremely heavy to lift out of the hole, or worse, you can corkscrew the auger in so deep that it'll get stuck.
- **Cover your holes.** After the holes are dug, cover them with scraps of plywood to keep workers from falling in and to keep the holes from caving in if it rains.



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## SAFETY PAGE MEETING GUIDE

Topic: Handheld Auger Safety

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Shift: \_\_\_\_\_

Number in crew: \_\_\_\_\_ Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety or Health issues discussed. Include recent accident investigations and hazards involving tools, equipment, the work environment, work practices and any Safety or Health recommendations:

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Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

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Record of those attending:

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Supervisor's remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ (Print)      \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

# OHBA Safety Pages: Portable Fire Extinguishers

It does no good to be trained on how to use a portable fire extinguisher if it is not ready and available for use when needed. Here are a few of the steps to take to help ensure that portable fire extinguishers are ready for instant use.

- Do not store pallets, toolboxes, trash cans, or any other equipment or materials in front of a portable fire extinguisher. You must always maintain a clear and unobstructed path to portable fire extinguishers.
- Never use a portable extinguisher as a coat rack, nor should you hang equipment or devices such as extension cords or air hoses over an extinguisher. Although it may sound like an easy way to store these items, it will only slow someone down if they need to quickly gain access to the extinguisher to put out a fire.
- Once each year extinguishers must receive a thorough maintenance inspection and then get tagged by an outside inspection company. Make sure the inspection tags remain attached to extinguishers and report any untagged extinguishers.
- A visual inspection of each extinguisher must be completed at least once a month. So, help on occasion, and check extinguishers in your area for damage or deterioration. Also make sure the needle on pressure-activated extinguishers is pointing into the green "FULL" portion of the dial and report any that are not so they can be recharged.
- Once someone uses an extinguisher to fight a fire, it must be turned in for inspection and recharging. In fact, turn it in even if you only pull out the retainer pin but do not actually discharge the extinguisher. That is because you may have inadvertently broken the seal that maintains pressure inside the extinguisher, which could cause it to lose pressure and not function as intended in the future.



So anytime you see a portable fire extinguisher that is inaccessible, not fully charged, or just looks like it may have been damaged in some way, please rectify the problem or let your supervisor know right away so the problem can be taken care of. And the same thing applies if you ever notice that an extinguisher is not hanging in its designated place.



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# OHBA Safety Pages: Wrench Safety

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## **Inspect the Work Environment –**

- Inspect for rounded or worn bolt heads or nuts. Remove accumulation of grease, oil, or similar hazards.
- Remove grease, oil, mud, ice/snow, or other slip hazards from walking or working surfaces.

## **Use the Correct Wrench for the Task –**

- Use the correct wrench type for the job. Use pipe wrenches for pipe plumbing fittings and general use wrenches for nuts and bolts.
- Select the correct wrench size to avoid slippage.
- Do not use damaged, defective, or excessively worn wrenches.



## **When Using the Wrench –**

- Position your body in a way that will prevent you from losing your balance.
- If possible, pull the wrench towards you, instead of pushing away.
- Apply slow and steady force. Do not use fast and jerky motions.
- Never use a cheater bar to obtain additional leverage.
- Do not strike a wrench with a hammer or similar object to gain more force.



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# OHBA Safety Pages: Chainsaw Safety

## Safe Use of Chainsaws in Construction

- Chainsaws for construction must be equipped with a chain break and with anti-kickback chain.
- Whether a chainsaw is electric- or gasoline powered, operators must follow the manufacturer's recommended safe operating procedures.
- Permit only trained and experienced workers to operate a chainsaw.
- Never walk around with a saw in the operating mode. Switch off the power source.
- Do not attempt to cut anything other than wood with a chainsaw.
- When operating a chainsaw, safety glasses and hearing protection must be worn at all times.
- Face shield and hard hat may also be required, depending on the hazards.
- Trousers or chaps with ballistic nylon pads sewn in provide protection to the legs.
- Hold the saw securely with both hands, with fingers and thumbs around the handles. This helps prevent the hands from being dislodged and provides control in the event of a kickback.
- Do not operate the saw when you are tired.
- Know where the bar tip is at all times.
- Don't allow the cut to bind (close) on the saw chain.
- Make sure the chain brake is functioning.

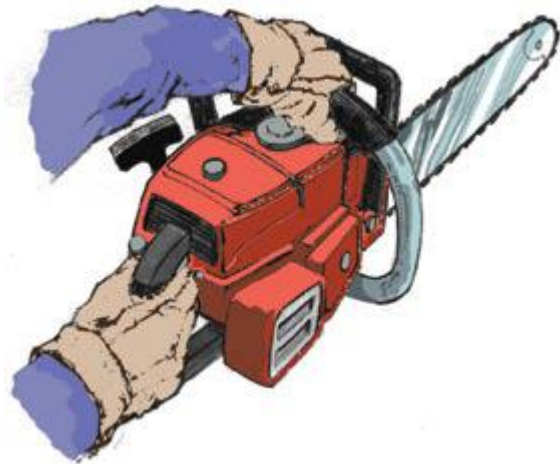


Diagram showing proper grip of a chainsaw



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