

Using Knives Safely

Select the Right Knife for the Job

- Match the size and type of knife to the job at hand. Consider size, weight, blade, balance, etc.
- Use high quality knives. Poor quality knives with less expensive steel will not hold their edges.
- Whenever possible, use a self-retracting or safety knife.
- Consider ergonomically designed knives with curved handles and/or blades.
- Use knives only for their intended purposes, never as screwdrivers, pry bars, etc.

Use Knives Safely

- Use a cutting board or block; this will prevent slipping, and will also help keep the knife sharp.
- Hold the knife by the handle, never by the blade. Keep your fingers away from the knife blade.
- Never cut or slice an item while holding it in your hand. Place it on a cutting board or block.
- Pay attention to the job. Never engage in horseplay when you or others are using knives.
- Cut away from, not toward, your body. Angle the blade of the knife away from your body, opposite arm, or leg.
- When cutting food, use a fork for steadying, where practical.
- When slicing, stand to the side of the cut. The safest slicing motion is down and away, not just down.
- When chopping, curl your fingers under while holding the food item being cut.
- When passing a knife, put it down first, so the other person can pick it up safely.
- When carrying a knife, point the blade down and the cutting edge slightly away.
- When using a knife with a retractable blade, pull the blade back into the handle as soon as the cut is completed. Before using the knife, be sure that the blades are operating properly.
- When using a knife with an adjustable blade, use the shortest blade needed to perform the cut.

LOSS CONTROL FELLOWSHIP

- When laying down a knife between tasks, ensure that its handle does not extend into a walking or working area.
- Never try to catch a falling knife. Let it come to rest, then pick it up.
- Do not try to cut rope, wire, or other materials with knives. Get the right tools.
- Provide training for workers who use knives. Don't assume that everyone knows how to use a knife properly.
- Wear protective mesh gloves when using knives, where practical or appropriate. (Follow food safety guidelines to prevent transfer of bacteria.)

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford's Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

Take Care of Knives Properly

- Keep knives sharp. Dull knives require users to exert more force, decreasing control and increasing risks.
- Be sure that the sharpening steel has a finger/hand guard.
- For knives that have interchangeable blades, change the blades when they begin to get dull.
- Keep handles in good repair and secured tightly to blades.
- Wash knives immediately after use, and put knives away as soon as they are cleaned and dried.
- Dishwashers can wear out knife blades and handles. Wash knives by hand.
- Never drop dirty knives in a sink; they can be dangerous, especially if covered by standing water.
- Store knives properly. Always replace them in the appropriate drawers, sheaths, or racks when not in use. Never store an unsheathed knife in a pocket.

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