



February 3 — Wrong Tool, Wrong Outcome

Observed an employee using pipe wrench as hammer

Explained to them they should always have a hammer in their bucket for the 100th time.

A pipe wrench was observed being used as a hammer instead of using the proper striking tool.

A pipe wrench is designed to grip and twist, not strike. When it's used like a hammer, the weight distribution, jaw design, and grip all work against control. The tool can slip, bounce, crack, or shatter, sending metal, knuckles, or fragments into the line of fire. What feels like a quick shortcut turns a controlled task into unpredictable force.

**A wrench can twist and grip just right,
But swing it wrong and you invite
A slip, a crack, a flying blow
Use the right tool, nice and slow.**

This isn't about skill it's about physics.

Hazards

- Loss of control of the tool
- Hand and knuckle injuries
- Flying metal fragments or broken tool parts
- Struck by injuries to nearby workers
- Damage to equipment or materials

Stats

- Tool misuse is a leading cause of hand injuries in industrial work
- Improvised striking tools significantly increase slip and rebound incidents
- Many hand injuries occur during "quick fixes" rather than planned tasks
- Improper tool selection is a frequent root cause in incident investigations

Words of Wisdom

- If it wasn't built to hit, don't hit with it.
- The right tool is faster than the wrong shortcut.

Pause and Think

Most tool misuse doesn't come from laziness it comes from convenience. The pipe wrench was already in hand, and grabbing a hammer felt like wasted time. But tools are engineered for specific forces. When we ignore that, the tool stops behaving predictably, and the injury happens before we can react.

- What tools do we commonly misuse on site?
- When does convenience override correct tool selection?
- What's the real cost of saving 30 seconds?