



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



Hand/Arm Vibration Syndrome Safety Message

Hand/Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) is caused by the frequent & repeated use of hand-held vibrating tools; such as power drills, hammer drills, concrete vibrators, chainsaws, jackhammers, powered lawn mowers, brush cutters, pedestal grinders or oscillating tools. The loss of feeling or pins & needles in one or more fingers is usually one of the first symptoms of HAVS, followed by not being able to feel things with your fingers, loss of strength in your hands, tips of fingers going white (and possibly then red) and becoming painful in cold or wet weather.

The prevention of HAVS is key because once you experience the onset of symptoms, there is no cure.

Buy good quality, low vibration tools.

- Use urethane power tool handle grips or dampening pads.
- Poorly maintained tools tend to develop worn or loose parts that may vibrate.
- Keep your hands warm so that blood flow is not restricted.
- Avoid smoking as this also restricts blood flow.
- Grip the tool as lightly as possible, as not to restrict blood flow.
- Keep the cold exhaust air of pneumatic tools away from the hands.
- Use work rotation as a method to reduce the exposure to vibration.