



It's Going to Happen

Dennis Belcher

Due to the nature of what we do, accidents will happen. We use machines designed to cut wood but that cut flesh just as easily. Surgically sharp blades cut fifty-pound chunks of wood that revolve at hundreds of revolutions per minute. Noise levels are guaranteed to cause hearing loss over time. The ever-present dust is in the air we breathe. All these things make what we do potentially dangerous.

The AAW devotes a great deal of energy and resources to educating turners how to work safely. Even so, accidents will still happen. Last year I gave a presentation to my local chapter (the Wilmington Area Woodturners) on the topic of *Turning 'til 90*. My purpose was to increase the awareness of safe practices so that woodturners could continue to turn safely over long periods of time. At the end of my presentation, I handed out a quiz I think every woodturner should fill out and post in his or her shop. For an electronic version, go to the AAW's website at woodturner.org/products/aw. Print a copy today for use in your shop!

This quiz has two intents: First, to increase awareness of what needs to happen after an accident occurs. A little advance preparation goes a long way to minimize the consequences of an accident, which will get us back into the shop that much faster. Second, the quiz can make us notice some of the less obvious things we need to do to be safe.

My challenge to you is to make a copy of the quiz, take it to your shop, and complete each question. Take corrective action on those items you realize need to be improved. Bad habits can be changed, but only if we stop to consider the things we do that may be unsafe.

It's Going to Happen Quiz

The nearest phone to use in an emergency is _____.

Nearest hospital approved by my insurance carrier is _____.

Nearest urgent-care facility approved by my insurance carrier _____.

Ambulance service closest to my home is _____ . They are____ minutes away.

I summon an ambulance by calling _____.

If I need help in the shop from my spouse or neighbor, I call_____.

My shop fire extinguisher is located_____.

The charge of my fire extinguisher was last checked on _____.

I regard my dust collection system as: inadequate adequate good superb

I consistently wear hearing protection in my shop. yes no

The electrical service/supply in my shop is: inadequate adequate

My plan if I develop an allergic reaction to a wood species is _____.

I have a faceshield. yes no

I wear a faceshield or safety glasses/goggles when I turn. never sometimes always

I wear a dust mask or dust helmet when I turn. yes no

I consistently use properly sized tools for each project (large tools for larger pieces, small tools for small projects). never sometimes always

I have reviewed the "near" accidents I have experienced on each machine that I own. yes no

I know and stay out of the "line of fire" for my lathe. yes no

I sit in the line of fire when watching a demonstration. yes no

I have a safety stop for my lathe that is out of the line of fire. yes no

I use the tailstock when roughing out. never sometimes always

I use the tailstock when turning out-of-round pieces. never sometimes always

The tool in my shop on which I most need to improve/change/review my work habits from a safety standpoint is _____.

I use a safety shield to protect spectators when doing a demonstration. yes no

I clean and organize my shop regularly. yes no

The woodturning tool that I am most afraid of is_____.

I need to change my use of _____ to improve safe work habits.

My body clock makes _____ the most dangerous time of the day to work with power tools.

The one thing that I should do to improve the safety of my shop is _____.