



# Drill Press Safety

West Virginia University  
Environmental Health and Safety



## Pre-Use Activities

- Review and understand information provided in the drill press operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Inspect the drill press for damage or disrepair. Assure both the drill press, chuck and spindle are functioning properly and inspect the electrical cord and plug.
- If a drill press fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the drill press from service by attaching a red tag that states "OUT OF SERVICE". Complete red tag with appropriate information.

## Operating Precautions

- Wear safety glasses or goggles when using a drill press.
- Never wear gloves, a tie, loose clothing, a watch, rings, or jewelry when using a drill press. Tie long hair back or secure under a cap.
- Support the underside of the stock to be drilled.
- Center punch the drill-hole location.
- Use a clamp or vise to securely fasten the stock to the drill press table. Never attempt to hand-hold stock while drilling.
- Insert bit into drill chuck and tighten with the chuck key. Remove chuck key from the drill chuck before starting the drill press.
- Make all drill press adjustments with the power shut off.
- Keep hands and fingers at least two inches from rotating drill bits.
- When drilling metal, use cutting oil to lubricate the bit.
- Do not exceed the recommended speeds for the type and size of drill bit being used or composition of the stock being drilled.
- When drilling deep holes, frequently raise the drill bit from the hole to remove cuttings and cool the bit
- Never stop the rotation of the drill chuck and spindle with your hands or fingers.
- If a drill bit binds, turn off the drill press and carefully turn drill chuck backwards by hand to free the drill bit.
- Clean the drill press table and work area upon completion of the drilling task.

