

## 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 chucks 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](http://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 \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_.

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The journal of the American Association of Woodturners, published six times per year. It includes profile articles about the world's leading turners, plus projects, photos, tips, techniques, and news.



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