

Safety Tidbits 12-10-12

Changing Conditions can lead to Fatalities

Conducting area Inspections, watching gauges/controls and following written procedures is critical.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited Mississippi Phosphates Corp. with 40 safety and health violations following the deaths of two workers in separate incidents at the company's Pascagoula facilities. The fatalities led to comprehensive inspections by OSHA.

On May 22, an operator attempting to start up a steam turbine in sulfuric acid plant No. 2 was struck by flying metal debris when the turbine housing ruptured due to apparent overpressurization. In a similar incident on June 1, an operator restarting a tripped steam turbine in sulfuric acid plant No. 3 also was killed by flying metal debris when the turbine housing ruptured due to overpressurization.

OSHA cited the company for three serious safety violations related to the fatalities, including exposing workers to "struck-by" hazards by not protecting them against overpressurization, and failing to maintain and service equipment in accordance with the company's maintenance program to prevent overpressurization.

An additional 23 serious safety violations involve failing to test and inspect pressure relief devices throughout the facility, provide handrails on fixed stairways, guard floor holes that could cause workers to trip and fall, provide fixed stairs to access tank gauging, address engineering controls during a process hazard analysis, and guard belt roller nip points, horizontal shafts, rotating shafts and horizontal V-belts. The violations also include various electrical hazards such as exposing workers to shocks, missing panel knockouts, broken face plates, unguarded light bulbs and an open ground in an outlet circuit.

Did you know - The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for an estimated 443,000 deaths, or nearly one of every five deaths, each year in the United States. 7,500 more die annually of oral cancer (chewing tobacco). An estimated 90% of all deaths from chronic obstructive lung disease are caused by smoking. Smokers - *it is not too early to start thinking about New Year's Resolutions.*

More on Hand Injuries

Keep your guard up! An employee was walking past a conveyor driven by a sprocket and chain. The chain was guarded on the outside but not the inside near the frame. As the employee stopped by the conveyor to talk with a co-worker he placed his gloved hand on top of the guard, then curled his fingers around the metal. The glove protruded under the guard and was caught by the chain. His hand was pulled between the chain and the sprocket resulting in serious injury.

Remember your hands are the most convenient tools you have for accomplishing a wide variety of tasks. It is up to you to keep them strong and healthy.

Some Hand Hazards to watch out for

Chemical – burns, dryness, rash, skin absorption affecting target organs (e.g., kidney, liver)

Mechanical/Pinch Points – cuts, contusions, abrasions, punctures, fractures, amputation

Thermal – scalding, burns, tissue death

Electrical – burns, tissue death, shock or electrocution,

Vibration – muscle atrophy, loss of function, reduced range of motion

Repetition – Carpal tunnel, loss of function, etc.

Environmental/Cold – frost nip, frost bite – tissue death, amputation

Biological – insect and spider bites/stings can result swelling, allergic reaction or tissue death

What can you do?

Plan your work - assess the hazards and take appropriate action to mitigate same

Use alternate, less hazardous chemicals if possible and the right PPE

Make sure gloves fit properly – if you are unsure about a chemical or procedure, Ask!

Rotate tasks or take routine breaks to give hands, fingers and arms appropriate rest periods

Keep track of your other hand, by keeping your mind on your work

Learn to Laugh More

Why did the moon rock taste better than earth rock? *It was a little meteor!!!!*

Why did the banana do to the doctor? *He wasn't peeling well!*