

Don't Run With Scissors!

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Safety Communiqué from the Technical Division Head



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Good news has arrived to the Lab with the recent announcement of the additional Federal dollars for our budget. This has brought an end to our rolling furloughs and forced vacations and we are gradually seeing a return to our former morale level. Hopefully we will no longer be distracted with the understandably negative thoughts that our budget crisis brought and we can focus on finishing the fiscal year with a strong safety record.

We have completed the scheduled Division Head Annual Safety Talks. For those of you that were not able to participate in one of these sessions, the presentation is available on video. Contact Les Peters to learn more.

Fermilab has a number of summer students over the next several weeks. We'll want to take special notice of these students to ensure that they work safely and have a positive experience during their time at Fermilab.

As always, safety remains on of our most important goals at Fermilab and it takes every employee working together to ensure that we all remain safe on the job.

INCIDENT BACKGROUND	HOW IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREVENTED
<p>An employee was in the process of clamping down a plate onto the table of a CNC machine using a clamp with steps (i.e. "teeth") and a step block (i.e. block with "teeth"). The clamp is held in place by a bolt that screws into the work table. The end of the clamp opposite the work piece engages the step block, thus keeping the clamp parallel to the work table as it holds the work piece in place. In this particular instance, the clamp and the step block were only about 50% engaged as the employee tightened the nut on the clamp with a crescent wrench held in his right hand. The clamp shifted from the torque action on the nut, causing the wrench to slip off of the nut. As a result, the employee struck their right wrist on an adjacent clamp.</p>	<p>The employee used step blocks that were too short, thus the clamps did not fully engage with the step blocks. Taller step blocks are available and should have been used, which would have allowed for full engagement with the clamp. Additionally, the crescent wrench that was being used by the employee had worn jaws, and the moveable jaw had significant play in it.</p>
<p>An employee was in the process of building a wood crate, using a cordless drill with a Phillips screw driver attachment to drive wood screws. The employee was attempting to start a screw horizontally into the wood while holding the screw with his left hand. The screw driver attachment slipped out of the screw head, and the screw driver attachment came into contact with the employee's left thumb. The impact created an abrasion on his thumb, and the employee went to Medical where he received first aid treatment.</p>	<p>The employee was wearing woven cotton gloves with a heavy latex coating on the fingers and the palm, which provide protection from small cuts while also allowing for good manual dexterity and good gripping ability. However, it is difficult to hold a screw in the horizontal position with your hand and apply sufficient pressure to start the screw into the wood. Magnetic drive guides are available, which have a retractable sleeve that fits around the screw, protecting the fingers and holding the screw in place. Wobbling and slippage of the screw is eliminated.</p>

Most safety experts believe that all accidents can be prevented. As you can see by the prevention column, a little extra care and attention on the part of the individuals might have avoided these accidents from occurring.