

Don't Run With Scissors!

November 2008 Safety Communiqué from the Technical Division Head



By: Giorgio Apollinari, Technical Division Head

We are approaching the end of fall and with the start of winter, our first snowfall is around the corner. This first occurrence is one of the most dangerous of the season, as people become re-acustomed to driving and walking on freshly fallen snow. Please be proactive when the snow comes, by driving carefully and especially watching out for the other drivers who may not be as cautious as you are on the road. In addition, when the first (and subsequent) snowfall comes, please be very careful in walking on sidewalks, whether they have been cleared or not. Sometimes ice hides beneath snow and cleared sidewalks may still have slick spots in places that the salt has not yet dissolved.

During the next few months, there are a number of holidays for which Fermilab is closed. It is common for many of our employees to schedule vacations during these weeks as well. This can lead to us trying to get work done while shorthanded; a prime opportunity for safety issues to arise. In our rush to perhaps get out the door for that long anticipated vacation, we need to be careful not to set aside safety for expediency. Please also ensure that with so many co-workers possibly being gone, you are not trying to perform work for which you may not be fully qualified.

We want all our employees to stay safe this holiday season!

INCIDENT BACKGROUND	HOW IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREVENTED
<p>An employee's left fifth finger was pinched by a hinge on a cabinet that was being discarded in a dumpster, causing a laceration and contusion. As the employee was throwing the cabinet into the dumpster, the hinged door swiveled in such a way as to pinch his finger between the door and side piece just as he was letting go of the cabinet. This resulted in a tearing laceration of the exterior side and pad of the finger. The medical treatment consisted of eight stitches.</p>	<p>The employee was not wearing protective gloves at the time of the incident. He stated that he was aware of the exposed nails and screws and that he was handling the cabinet in a manner to avoid contact with them. However, he did not anticipate that the hinged door would create a pinch point as he tossed the section into the dumpster. He therefore did not modify the handling method, nor did he wear work gloves. Either action would have prevented the injury, or at least lessened the seriousness of the injury.</p>
<p>While moving a die cart, an employee's left lower leg became caught between the cart and a motorized pallet jack. The employee was manually pulling the cart through an open gate in the Tevatron when the cart began to roll on its own. The concrete floor in this area slopes slightly downward in the direction the cart was being moved. The employee stated that he was not able to control the cart's motion at that point. During this time the employee attempted to move away from the moving cart, but was not able to completely evade the rolling cart. The employee's left calf became caught between the die cart and the towing fixture mounted on the motorized pallet jack.</p>	<p>In the future two individuals will be assigned the task of moving the die cart through this area of the Tevatron as a means of maintaining control of the cart on the sloped floor.</p>
<p>While inspecting a water pipe for leakage, an employee bumped the top of their head on a wall bracket, causing a superficial laceration.</p>	<p>The individual was not paying attention to their surroundings. Bump caps are also available to employees of this group for use when working in tight quarters or areas with low-hanging obstacles.</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.