

Don't Run With Scissors!

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Safety Communiqué from the Technical Division Head



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We're well into winter weather time and it provides a good opportunity to review some winter safety tips.

- When snow or ice is present, use caution when exiting your vehicle. Try to place both feet on the ground and hold onto your vehicle as you stand up.
- Watch for uneven, icy surfaces that could be hidden underneath a layer of fresh snow.
- Instead of walking heel to toe take short flat steps, i.e. shuffle your feet, to help sustain your balance.
- Wear shoes or boots with good treads on their soles; you can change into your work or office shoes once you are inside.
- Be aware that paved parking lots and walkways may be covered with a thin layer of ice after they have been plowed.
- Be aware that areas previously been melted by salt can refreeze as temperatures drop late in the day.

INCIDENT BACKGROUND	HOW IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREVENTED
An employee was standing on the bed of a flat-bed truck moving cribbing from the bulkhead area (front of the truck bed) to the truck bed in preparation to transport a load of steel. The cribbing, made from recycled plastic, weighs approximately ten pounds each. The employee was standing close to the bulkhead with a piece of cribbing in his hands and struck his right index finger against the bulkhead, smashing his finger between the cribbing and the bulkhead. The employee was wearing leather work gloves at the time of the incident. The incident resulted in a fracture of the finger.	This injury could have been prevented if the employee had paid closer attention to their position on the truck bed as they were moving the cribbing.
As an individual walked north along the drive between Wilson Hall and Linac, an extremely strong gust of wind knocked the individual to the ground. The individual's face hit the asphalt pavement, breaking their eyeglasses and causing lacerations to the upper nose and left cheek. Five sutures were required (upper nose). Three left fingers were also treated with first aid.	This incident occurred on a day of unusual weather conditions, when wind gusts routinely exceeded 50 mph. This incident points out that while it is generally known to be windy around Wilson Hall, caution must be used on extremely blustery days.
While lubricating a fan motor, an employee caught their left ring finger between the fan belt and pulley, causing a fracture of the fingertip. The employee was pulling on the fan belt to rotate the motor when the incident occurred.	This incident resulted from a lack of known maintenance requirements as well as not having clearly defined maintenance operating procedures for this type of activity (i.e. lubricating rotating equipment). Current lubrication maintenance procedures are based on historical knowledge rather than factual knowledge.

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.