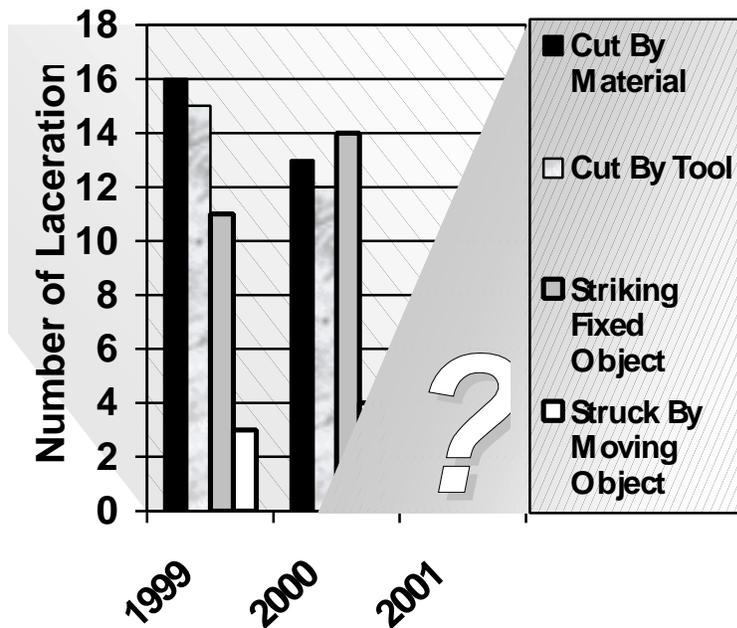


CUT IT OUT!

Author: Injury/Illness Prevention Subcommittee
Miller

Editor: Tim

Every year at Fermilab, employees are cut while on the job. Some of the cuts are minor and only require first aid. But many involve medical treatment, including sutures, as well as restricted work. Being aware of your work area, choosing the right tool for the job, and taking your time, can all help to prevent cuts from happening. In 1999, and again in 2000, cuts accounted for one-fourth of all reported injuries at Fermilab. The narrative below describes some of the associated incidents we've had over this period.



Cut By Material

Employees are often cut by materials they are working with or working near. It is important to be aware of even innocent looking things in your work area. For example, two employees were cut by the large staples used to assemble cardboard boxes. Their cuts were serious enough to warrant medical treatment. Another employee was cut when he struck a sharp piece of metal in his work space while gesturing with his hands. Sharp edges and sharp objects are all around us...*be aware to avoid injury.*

Cut By Tool

Use the right tools, the right way. Screwdrivers are for use on screws. They are not meant to be used for prying things open. When using tools like utility knives or Exacto™ knives, cut away from yourself and keep your hands and fingers out of the way. Make sure the blade is sharp. Dull blades cause more injuries than sharp blades, because the tool is more likely to slip. Don't store open knives or blades in your pockets. Think that's silly? People have done it here! In the last two years, 27 people

have been injured by the tool they were using. In many cases it was because the tool was being improperly used or stored. Think before you use a tool. Is it the right one for the job? Is it in good condition? When you put it away, is it properly stored? Can you or others be cut by the sharp blades or edges? Taking an extra moment to choose the right tool or store it properly can prevent a trip to the Medical Office.

Striking a Fixed Object

Hit your head on a shelf, bang your knee into a piece of equipment, or walk into a closed door... Sound familiar? Probably all of us have done something like that at one time or another. The fact is, about once a month someone at Fermilab gets a serious laceration from doing something like that. How do we prevent this from happening? Raising awareness is the key. Remember to look up as you walk. Be aware of your surroundings. When you bend over, remember what is above you. Be cautious... yadda, yadda, yadda... we hear it all the time. Actually, being more aware takes practice.



Included in the category of “striking a fixed object” are injuries that result when employees fall and strike the ground. One interesting source of falls has been our onsite population of geese. Watch out for these waterfowl, particularly during their spring nesting season when they become territorial and aggressive. Employees have actually received cuts serious enough to warrant sutures from attempts to escape a goose attack.

Paying attention, taking your time, choosing the right tool for the job and maintaining an overall higher level of awareness will prevent injuries. It will reduce the near misses and it will result in a safer, more

Being Struck By a Moving Object

Moving equipment, falling objects, and materials in the workplace that become airborne are all examples of moving objects that can hurt you. Think before you work. Will your actions impact someone else in the area? Is it possible that the material you’re working on could slip or get away from you? Paying attention to your work area and the activities around you will provide some level of protection. Wearing proper PPE, such as a hard hat or gloves, can help to prevent an injury in the event you are struck by a moving object.



This wound was caused by an individual who grabbed a knife that he thought was covered by a sheath



This message should be distributed to all employees via delivery of un-addressed copies to Fermilab mail stations.
Suggestions for ES&H message topics should be directed to Tim Miller at MS119, tmiller@fnal.gov, or X3019