

Location of Incident: Vessel 64C-109 in Plant 64

Date of Incident: January 17, 2009

Incident Number: 53984

Nature of Incident: Incident with Loss



Description of Incident: On January 17 an electrician was working on installing 4" cable tray in the area around vessel 64C-109. During his work activities he needed to change the drill bit in his cordless drill. At this time the worker was wearing a cotton glove liner and held the drill chuck as seen in the picture above left. The worker held the chuck with his finger and thumb and proceeded to power the drill, so the rotation of the drill, combined with holding the chuck would loosen the bit. As the bit started to spin it caught the workers glove and pinky finger causing it to bend awkwardly. The worker did not report the injury on the day it occurred, however when he returned to work the following morning his finger was swollen and sore. He notified his foreman of his injury and visited first aid. X-rays at NLRHC later showed that the worker had suffered a hair line fracture to his finger.

Root Cause(s):

1. Power source for cordless drill was not removed prior to attempting to release drill bit. There was no clear procedure for the safe operation of cordless power tools.
2. Improper motivation. Worker stated that he felt this way was faster rather than using two hands to loosen the chuck on the drill.
3. Inadequate risk assessment. The worker failed to identify any hazards associated with operating a drill or power tools.
4. Worker was not wearing proper PPE at the time. While carrying out this work the worker was wearing cotton glove liners which offer inadequate hand protection. The cotton glove became entangled on the drill bit when he pulled the trigger to power drill.

Preventative/Corrective Actions:

1. Issue bulletin to all crews regarding manufacturer's recommendations for changing drill bits on cordless drill. Remove power source prior to changing bits. Reinforce with workers not to take short cuts or to deviate from procedures.
2. Reinforce with workers the need for detailed FLRA's specific to the tasks they are completing. Supervision to monitor for compliance and quality.
3. Stand down held with electrical crew regarding immediate reporting of incidents.
4. Contractor to issue safety bulletin to create awareness and help eliminate the potential for reoccurrence.

Disconnect battery pack from tool or place the switch in the locked or off position before making any adjustments, changing accessories, or storing the tool. Such preventive safety measures reduce the risk of starting the tool accidentally.