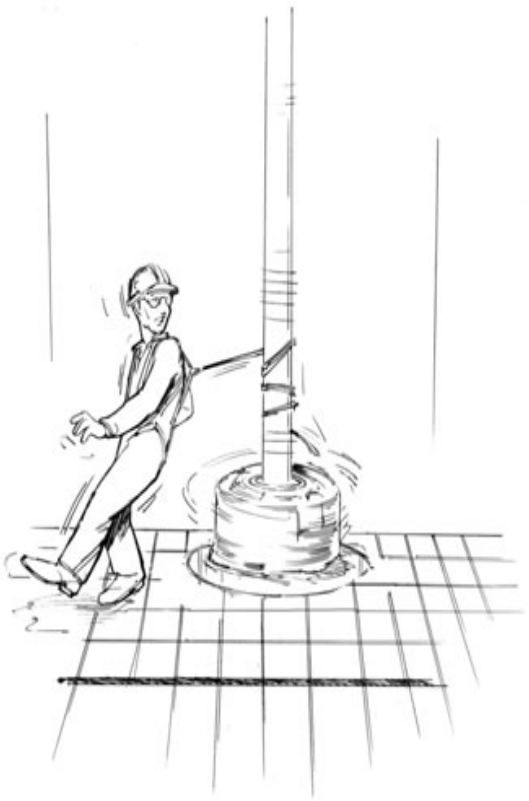
Worker dies when lanyard gets caught in rotating shaft

A young motor man was fatally injured when his fall protection lanyard was caught and wrapped around the rotating shaft on a drilling rig. He had completed some work on the derrick using a full body harness with a lanyard attached to the back dorsal D-ring of the harness. After climbing down, he detached the lanyard from the anchor line and, without removing the harness or the lanyard, began walking across the rig floor, in close proximity to the rotating shaft. The lanyard contacted and wrapped around the shaft and pulled him into the rotating equipment.

What could be done to prevent a similar accident?



- Develop, communicate, and enforce adequate procedures to ensure workers do not enter the danger zone when the rotary equipment is in operation.
- Guard rotating equipment: consider sensors to activate warning alarms and emergency stops when workers or equipment enter the established danger zone.
- Keep any other hoses, cables, or equipment away from rotating equipment.
- Ensure workers remove fall protection immediately when it's not needed.
- Remove or confine any articles of loose clothing, hair, jewelry, etc.
- If there is a danger of contact with moving parts of machinery or with electrically energized equipment, or if the work process presents similar hazards the clothing of the worker must fit closely about the body, dangling neckwear, bracelets, wristwatches, rings or similar articles must not be worn, except for medical alert bracelets which may be worn with transparent bands that hold the bracelets snugly to the skin.

Expect the unexpected. Each injury listed above occurred while performing normal job tasks.

Don’t take routine job tasks for granted.

Ask the Five Questions:

- ***Do I understand the job task?***
- ***Do I understand the safe work practices?***
- ***Do I have the capability to perform the job***
- ***Do I understand the process hazards?***
- ***Do I feel comfortable doing this job?***

In order to sustain an injury-free work environment it is critical that each employee understand the hazards associated with their job and the tasks being performed. We have numerous policies and procedures in place to help us perform our job functions safely. However there are many routine job tasks that cannot be addressed through policies and procedures and it is imperative that employees be proactive and analyze what could go wrong and how can they mitigate the hazards.

	First Aids	Recordable Injuries	Lost Time Injuries	Injury Types	Bite/Stings	Burns	Chem Contact	Cuts/Abrasion	Foreign Body	Heat Related	Slip/Trip/Falls	Strains/Sprains	Struck-by
2010	149	7	1		10	8	7	25	32	9	19	20	27
2009	93	7	1		12	3	0	22	19	8	8	17	12
2008	158	5	1		23	6	9	31	35	5	9	20	26

Handy Tips for Hand Safety

Ignorance isn't bliss. When OSHA revised its Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) standard in 1994, it included a new rule on hand safety (29 CFR 1910.138). There were two main reasons for revising the overall PPE rule: Too many employees were not wearing PPE, and too many employees who did wear PPE were either using the wrong PPE or using it incorrectly. Regarding hand injuries specifically, one study showed that 70 percent of injured workers did not wear gloves, and the remaining 30 percent wore gloves that were inadequate, damaged, or wrong for the type of hazard being protected against. OSHA therefore concluded that it simply wasn't enough for employers to require employees to wear PPE—the employer needed to select PPE on the basis of the specific conditions and potential hazards of the task to be performed.

Have employees conduct their own hazard assessment for hand safety. OSHA requires employers to determine the types of PPE to be required by assessing the workplace for hazards. Involving employees in this hazard assessment can be an effective training technique. On the topic of hand safety, ask them to list all the ways their hands might be injured on the job. Depending on the jobs done in your workplace, the list might include:

Cuts, lacerations, punctures, and even amputations

- Abrasions from rough surfaces
- Broken fingers or other bones of the hand
- Chemical burns
- Severe skin irritation (dermatitis) from contact with certain chemicals
- Thermal burns from touching very hot objects
- Absorption of hazardous substances through unprotected skin

Choose the right gloves for the job. Of course, wearing gloves will help protect against many of the hazards listed above. But not just any kind of glove will do. As another training exercise, have employees match the hazards they've identified with the right kind of glove, and ask them to explain why certain types of gloves are or are not appropriate for certain hazards. (For example, use rubber rather than cotton gloves for handling hazardous liquids because rubber repels liquids, while cotton absorbs them.) And for hand injuries that generally are not prevented by gloves (lacerations, broken bones, amputations), remember to include training on safe ways to use hand tools, power tools, machinery, and other typical causes of serious hand injuries.

The Sailor and Pirate

A sailor meets a pirate, and they take turns recounting their adventures at sea. Noting the pirate's peg-leg, hook, and eye patch, the sailor asks, "So, how did you end up with the peg-leg?"

The pirate replies "We was caught in a monster storm off the cape and a giant wave swept me overboard. Just as they were pullin' me out, a school of sharks appeared and one of 'em bit me leg off".

"Blimey!" said the sailor. "What about the hook?"

"Ahhhh...", mused the pirate, "We were boardin' a trader ship, pistols blastin' and swords swingin' this way and that. In the fracas me hand got chopped off."

"Zounds!" remarked the sailor. "And how came ye by the eye patch?"
"A seagull droppin' fell into me eye", answered the pirate.

"You lost your eye to a seagull dropping?" the sailor asked incredulously.
"Well..." said the pirate, "..it was me first day with the hook."