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INCIDENT ALERT

A vendor was in the process of modifying a section of floor inside a freezer unit. He was using a sharp knife to assure an even cut. As he was trimming an edge the knife slipped and struck his left hand in the webbing between his thumb and forefinger. The worker transported himself to a nearby emergency room where he received 4 stitches and was released to return to work.

LESSONS LEARNED

This particular type of injury remains the most common on our construction projects. Many steps can be taken to prevent cuts and lacerations. In this case the worker was holding a section of flooring in his left hand, and his hand was directly in the path of the cut. Securing the floor section with a clamp would have allowed him to place his hand well away from the path of the knife. Second, he was not wearing cut resistant gloves while performing his task. Using appropriate personal protective equipment may have minimized or eliminated the laceration. Third, he had not developed a task plan for the activity which would have identified the hazards associated with the task being performed. Fourth, this company did not develop a safety plan for the project.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Talk with your contractor about their expectations and understanding of the need for job hazard analysis and task planning. Ask what their expectations are for training workers in tool use and proper techniques. Ask your contractors how they assure that tier contractors and vendors develop and implement an effective project specific health and safety plan.

2. Watch for tasks that may result in similar injuries during your walk through. Are people cutting toward themselves? Are people wearing proper personal protective equipment for their task? Have they completed a task plan? Does it identify the hazards and how to mitigate them?

3. Share this Incident Alert with your contractor and ask them to share it with their workers.

Distribution:
All CPO Staff