Prepared by Ron Fouty  
Date Issued: January 10, 2007

INCIDENT ALERT

A laborer was working as part of a crew removing concrete sections from a wall. The crew had decided to take one 2 foot by 3 foot by 6 inch section out in one piece. Understanding the need to be able to lift the section after it was removed, the two workers had placed two previously cut concrete cores on the floor to allow space to get a lifting device under it. They chose to lift the cut piece manually then set it on the cores. As they were setting the section down it unexpectedly tipped and fell on one of the cores, crushing the tip of the right index finger of one of the workers. He was transported to a nearby medical facility for treatment and is currently recovering at his home.

LESSONS LEARNED

During an incident review meeting with the contractor, several contributing factors to the injury were identified. The section being demolished intersected an existing opening, which resulted in the lower right corner of the section missing. This changed the center of gravity. When the workers pulled the concrete from the cut the load unexpectedly shifted.

Also, the work area was quite restricted and did not allow the use of a mechanical lifting device for the load. The company has not established a maximum weight their workers can lift. This could lead to an individual guessing the amount they can support, which in turn can lead to injury. In this case the section of concrete was approximately 3 cubic feet, which would weigh in excess of 400 pounds. During the discussion it was established that a better procedure would have been to either cut the concrete into smaller sections prior to removal or to place dunnage on the floor adjacent to the work and pull the section free, allowing it to drop to the dunnage.

The contractor did not have a specific requirement for the workers to develop a task plan prior to beginning the work. Developing a task plan along with setting guidelines on safe removal of concrete sections would most likely have helped prevent this injury.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ask your contractor about how they manage site specific safety plan review, job hazard analysis and task planning for their contractors. Ask what considerations are given to ergonomic and other physical risk factors when deciding methods for the removal of demolition material and other material handling processes. Ask if they have established maximum weight limits for their workers and if those limits extend to the contractors they have working for them.

2. Watch for tasks that may result in similar injuries during your walk through. Are workers positioning their fingers where they may be pinched between objects? Are better, safer, less risky methods for material movement available? Are workers attempting to lift excessively heavy loads?

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

Distribution:
All CPO Staff