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INCIDENT ALERT

A laborer had been tasked with chipping concrete from a floor directly adjacent to a wall. Metal stud walls in the area had been demolished, allowing concrete demolition to occur. The concrete to be removed was a section running the length of the wall, and was approximately 10 inches wide. The floor had been cut as close to the wall as possible with a concrete saw, and the worker needed to remove the flooring between the cut and the wall. He was using a jackhammer for the operation. His work process was to chip away a section of concrete, then lift the jackhammer and step backward to begin chipping another section. At one point when he lifted the jackhammer to change position his right elbow struck a piece of metal stud that had inadvertently been left attached to the wall, resulting in a laceration. He reported the injury to his supervisor who transported him to a nearby medical facility where he received stitches and was released to return to work.

LESSONS LEARNED

During the incident investigation several issues were identified. First, the demolition crew that had removed the metal stud wall could have done a more thorough job of removing sharp objects from the area. Second, the worker should have inspected the area for any potential hazards. The sharp section of metal could easily have been identified and removed or bent down. Lastly, though a task plan had been developed by the work crew, it did not address the specific hazards associated with the task of chipping concrete. A good task specific planning effort may have helped prevent the injury.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Talk with your contractor about how they manage demolition and their expectations for their contractors to remove or mitigate all sharps that may be left behind. Talk with them about crew based task planning efforts and ask how they emphasize the need to inspect the work area for hazards during the plan development.

2. Watch for activities that may result in similar injuries during your walkthrough. Are workers aware of the hazards present in their work area? Have they taken steps to eliminate hazards? Are sharp edges covered or bent down? Have the workers planned their task?

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

Distribution:
All CPO Staff