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INCIDENT ALERT

A worker was tasked with deploying an absorbent boom to contain a minor petroleum product spill into a waterway. He was working from a small boat. While performing his work he noticed that the spill was beginning to seep underneath a barge that was being used as part of the project. The worker began deploying the boom around the barge. In order to steady himself in his boat he placed his left hand on the barge. He did not notice his hand was inside an opening that some temporary piling was driven through. The barge shifted and his hand was pinched between the piling and the barge. He was able to free himself and report to his supervisor, who transported him to a nearby medical facility where he received four stitches and was released to return to work.

LESSONS LEARNED

During the incident investigation several contributing factors to the injury were identified. First, the worker was not wearing gloves. Though they may not have prevented this crushing injury, they may have minimized the extent of injury suffered. Second, the worker was in a hurry to deploy the boom and did not pay attention to his hand positioning (he was aware that the opening in the barge existed and of the potential pinch hazard). Third, the opening was not marked to warn of the pinch hazard or guarded to prevent body parts from entering the opening. As a result of the incident, the contractor will be marking the area and additional training will be given to employees about the specific hazard and pinching or crushing hazards in general.

The necessary planning aspects of a job are many times overlooked in what is perceived as an emergency situation. As firefighters, police, and military personnel can attest to, there is never a more important time to step back and plan your response than in an emergency. In this case, no task specific plan had been developed.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ask your contractor about how they manage emergency response and the necessary planning associated with that type of work. Ask to review their emergency response plans, and look for identified roles and hazard analysis associated with specific tasks.

2. Watch for pinch hazards and body positioning on your job safety walkthroughs. Are workers placing themselves at risk of injury?

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

Distribution:
All CPO Staff