Prepared by Ron Fouty

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INCIDENT ALERT

An ironworker general foreman was walking near his work area when he observed his superintendent attempting to move a non-powered manlift through a doorway. The lift was too tall to roll through the door and needed to be tilted slightly. The worker walked over and grabbed one side of the lift in an attempt to help. The lift tipped in his direction and over-balanced. Material in the hallway he was in prevented him from stepping clear and the lift struck his knee as it fell to the floor. The worker shrugged off the injury, but it continued to ache for several days. His superintendent finally directed him to go to the doctor. The doctor determined he had suffered a knee strain, outlined work restrictions to assist in healing, and released him to return to work.

LESSONS LEARNED

The incident investigation highlighted two issues associated with the injury. First, in his desire to do a good job and help his supervisor, the worker jumped in to help without understanding what was taking place. The supervisor was testing to see how the equipment could best be moved. Had the worker taken the time to talk with his supervisor he would have understood what he was trying to accomplish. This conversation would have essentially have been a short task planning session. Both men could have then decided what the best method for moving the equipment was and then proceeded with the task. Next, had the hallway been clear of materials the worker may have been able to step clear of the falling lift, thereby escaping injury.

The worker was reminded how important it is to report an injury as soon as it occurs. Prompt treatment can help a worker to heal more quickly and prevent further aggravation of an injury.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Talk with your contractor about how they reinforce the need for task planning and hazard assessment with their subcontractors. Ask about how they reinforce the need for continuous communication and what their workers recognize as a task. Ask about how they manage material storage, and if they assure that material is clear of halls and doorways.

2. Watch for activities that may result in similar exposures to injury during your walkthrough. Are workers communicating with each other prior to performing tasks? Are they safely moving materials and equipment?

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

Distribution:
All CPO Staff

REV. (DATE)