



This is the second in a series of Safety Tip Sheets addressing common hazards found within the forging industry. These Tip Sheets are designed to bring awareness and provide practical information on methods for reducing these injuries.

Safety Tip Sheet No. 2:

Help Prevent Hand Lacerations

- **What is a laceration and how big of a problem is it?**

A laceration is defined as a jagged wound or cut resulting from contact with a sharp object or surface. Lacerations consistently rank among the most frequent injuries sustained in the forging industry and most commonly happening to the hands. Each year, more than 1,000,000 U.S. workers receive treatment in emergency departments for acute hand injuries. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that approximately 110,000 workers with hand and finger injuries lose days away from work annually — second only to back strain and sprain.

- **What increases the risk of a hand laceration?**

Researchers at the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety, in collaboration with colleagues at the Harvard School of Public Health, conducted a study of occupational acute hand injuries. The risk of a hand injury was significantly elevated when working with equipment, tools, or work pieces not performing as expected, when using a different work method to do a task, doing an unusual task, being distracted, and/or rushed.

- **What can be done to reduce the risk of lacerations?**

- **Make available cut resistant gloves / sleeves / clothing for employees.**
- **Train personnel to recognize potential sources of lacerations (sharp edges, sharp surfaces, burrs, metal turnings, banding straps, etc.).**
- **Inspect equipment and product for sharp hazards on a regular basis.**
- **Eliminate, guard, or pad edges and surfaces that present a risk.**
- **Maintain good housekeeping and organization.**
- **Remove metal turnings, chips, and stringers from a work using the proper tools, never by hand, even with cut resistant gloves.**
- **When cleaning up broken glass use a broom and dust pan.**
- **Do not pick up the glass by hand, even with gloves on.**
- **Choose and use the proper tool for cutting operations.**
- **Maintain a sharp bladed tool to reduce the amount of force required to slice the object and to maintain better control of the knife.**
- **Always cut away from yourself.**
- **Consider purchasing one of the many available styles of safety knives to further reduce the risk of injury during cutting operations.**

(Continued on Reverse Side)



First Aid Treatment for Hand Lacerations

- **The person treating the injured employee must first protect themselves against infection through contact with the injured employee's bodily fluids.**
- **Based on the severity of the wound, outside medical treatment may be required.**
- **Any equipment, clothing, or surfaces contaminated with blood or other body fluids must be cleaned by a person trained in the proper cleaning and disposal methods per your company's bloodborne pathogen transmission prevention policy.**

Minor Cut - First Aid

- **To treat a minor cut, first wash your hands thoroughly with soap to avoid infection. Next wash the cut with mild soap and water.**
- **Apply direct pressure to stop the bleeding.**
- **Apply an antibacterial ointment to coat and protect the wound.**
- **Once the wound has stopped bleeding cover it with a bandage that will not stick to the injury.**
- **Call 911 for all medical emergencies.**

Please refer to OSHA Standards:

- *29 CFR 1910.132 - General requirements: A hazard assessment and training must be conducted;*
- *29 CFR 1910.138 - Hand protection;*
- *29 CFR 1910.1030 - Bloodborne pathogen*

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