

WHAT HAPPENED?

A boat trailer had come into the shop for suspension repairs as it had lost a wheel. The technician removed a bent suspension mounting bracket and was hammering the bracket straight with a ball peen hammer and a steel wedge block when the incident happened. On his third strike of the bracket, a chunk of steel from the hammer's face broke off and penetrated the technician's coveralls and torso, lodging in an artery. First aid was being administered when the seriousness of the injury was determined and 911 was called for an ambulance.



WHAT DID/COULD HAVE WENT WRONG?

The technician required surgery and was hospitalized for less than 70 hours. As this was a Dangerous occurrence according to the Occupational Health & Regulation 9(2), it was a reportable incident and was reported to Labour Relations and Workplace Safety (LRWS).

Had this Technician not received the immediate medical attention he did, he could have potentially died as a result of these injuries. If there is any question with respect to the severity of the injury, call 911 and do not attempt to transport yourself, there are too many variables that could go wrong during transportation that we are not equipped to handle.

KEY LESSON FROM INCIDENT

During the investigation, the company found the hammer's face had previously been damaged and had stress risers in certain areas. The company's immediate response to this incident was to inspect all hammers. (ball peen, sledge etc.) They found several hammer faces to have unacceptable wear patterns as well as damage to the handles. The company also inspected their chisels, pry bars and any tool that would be used in conjunction with a hammer. Any questionable hammers were disposed of and replaced with new brand CSA approved hammers (not the cheaper import hammers).

The company has since developed a policy that requires anyone that's using a hammer or grinder to wear a leather apron and full-face mask and gloves. The company has also implemented an inspection process to ensure all hammers and tools are being inspected prior to use, as well as once a month during their monthly shop inspections.

The Company has also implemented the policy that if they deem it necessary to call an ambulance the employee must accept. The Company will cover the cost of the ambulance.

This incident demonstrates the importance of inspecting your tools and equipment prior to being used, as well as knowing and practicing your Company's Emergency Response Procedures. Seconds can be the difference between life and death, so know what you need to do in the event of an emergency situation.

If you have had an incident that you would like to share in confidence, please email info@motorsafety.ca