

Incident Report

Control Type: N/A

Machine Type: Hydraulic

Speed: N/A

Rise: N/A

Hoistway Configuration: Simplex

Conditions: TM Supervising/Assisting "Pit Sealing" by others



Description of Incident

- A Temporary Mechanic was assigned to supervise and assist another craft that was contracted to perform "pit sealing" in a hydraulic elevator pit located in a parking garage.
- The TM provided access to the pit by raising the elevator, placing pipe stands, closing and pinning the pit valve and performing lock out/tag out.
- The pit sealing crew was to prepare the pit floor for a fire-retardant epoxy based material that would seal the pit.
- The TM provided access to a GFCI outlet outside of the pit and remained in the vicinity near the machine room and his service vehicle.
- The pit sealing crew commenced work by pouring a gallon of Acetone on the pit floor, cleaning the oil and grease from the floor.
- As they began using an angle grinder to remove high spots in the pit floor, sparks ignited the Acetone vapor.
- Both men caught fire from the ignition and flash back of the explosion.
- The TM heard the event, grabbed the fire extinguisher from the Machine Room, and extinguished the fire from one of the crew. He continued to assist until emergency responders arrived.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- Always perform a JHA
- Insist that your employer provide Safety Data Sheets for chemicals used by other crafts under your supervision
- Understand hazardous material warning labels and review employers Hazard Communication Program
- Non elevator work performed in pits by others, should be supervised to prevent catastrophic events from occurring
- Enroll in the NEIEP Confined Space Awareness course for a greater awareness of safe work practices in confined spaces.

Acetone

Colorless, highly volatile liquid; sweet odor. Irritating. Also causes: muscle weakness, mental confusion, coma (high concentrations). Ingestion: GI irritation, kidney and liver damage, coma. Chronic: dermatitis. Highly flammable.



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