

Safety Flash

Incident with Recordable Injury

Date of Incident: 7/22/2018

The Incident

A GEM pipefitter was working from a scaffold as he welded rupture disk barrel rings on the steam generator at Lordstown Clean Energy. To the east, on the other side of the generator, insulation work was underway. Throughout the shift, third-party insulators were blowing remnants of insulation with a shop vac to clean the area. The pipefitter was using two GEM standard-issue (fibre metal) hardhats. He was wearing the hardhat with welding attachments to perform his welding task. The second hardhat was on the deck of the scaffold about five feet behind the welding area. When he switched to the second hardhat after completing the welding task, debris fell on his face and he immediately felt something in his left eye. His foreman was nearby and witnessed the incident. The pipefitter climbed down from the scaffold, flushed his eye for about 15 minutes and worked the rest of his shift. The next day, the foreman noticed that the pipefitter's eye still looked irritated. On Tuesday, July 24, the pipefitter visited an ophthalmologist, who removed a piece of metal from his eye.

The Causes

- Flying debris from other contractors' cleaning operations, as well as GEM's hot work in the area.
- The steam generator building is large and lacks a natural draft when the unit is offline, particularly in elevated areas.

Prevent It

- Hang the hard hat where it won't collect debris near the front/brim.
- Before wearing a hardhat, make sure it's clean - turn it over and wipe it off if necessary.
- Continue to encourage hazard recognition and situational awareness of hazards created by others in nearby work areas.
- Consider new style PPE, such as monogoggle.

Action Plan

- Spoggles are now available onsite.
- Monogoggles are now available PPE (not suitable for grinding applications).

Keep Improving

Your health and safety are the most important part of every project. We need *your* help to eliminate unsafe behaviors and conditions. If you see a safer and better way to do a task, see your supervisor, or contact GEM Safety: Bill Cornett – 419-720-2728. To get personal protection equipment from the warehouse, call 419-720-2688.