

VOLTS NEWSLETTER

Valuing Our Lives Through Safety

October 2021, Volume 95

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Pinch Points...Potential SIF or Not?—Casey Draper

Several examples of different types of hand injuries and their preventative measures were discussed earlier this month in our Supervising Safety Newsletter. Let's expand on those key points focusing on the critical exposure of pinch points and relating the risks they pose not only to your hands, but other body parts as well.

A pinch point occurs when two objects come together with the possibility that something—a finger, hand, or even a person—can be caught between the objects and injured. Pinch points most commonly impact the fingers and hands, but they can impact any part of the body if you aren't careful. An injury from a pinch point can range from being minor to life-threatening. While minor pinch point injuries can cause blood blisters and contusions, more complex and severe injuries can include amputation and even death.

Examples of Pinch Point Exposures

- ⇒ Pliers
- ⇒ Excavator
- ⇒ Concrete blocks
- ⇒ Unsecured materials
- ⇒ Chains and pipes
- ⇒ Moving machinery
- ⇒ Forklifts

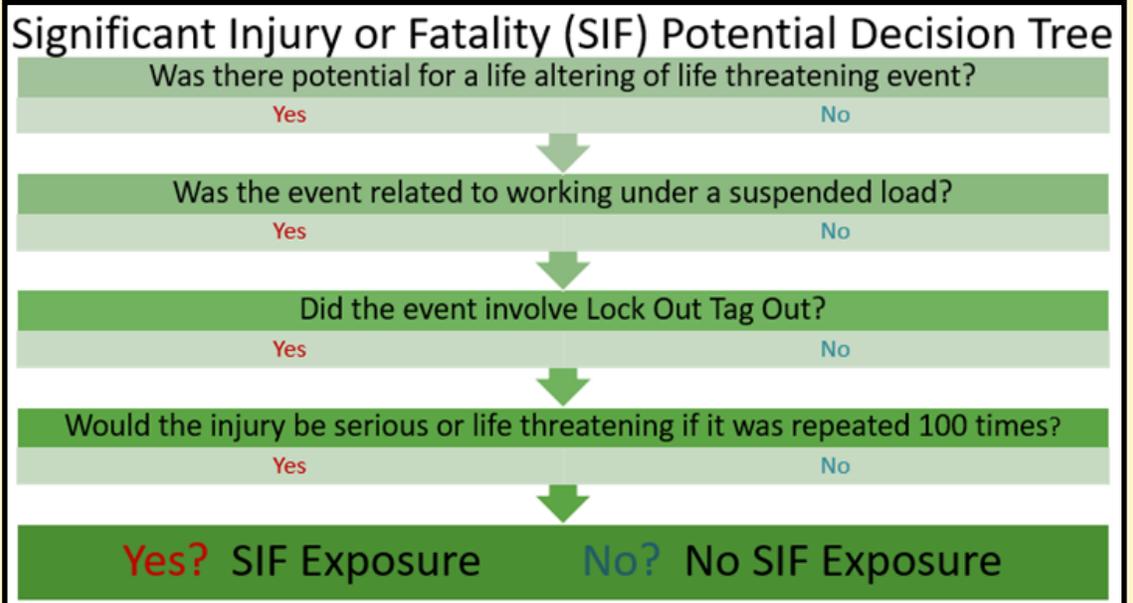
These are only some examples of where pinch point exposures may occur in the workplace, but pinch points are everywhere. We should



ask ourselves and others whether or not there is potential for a life-altering or life-threatening injury if _____ (fill in the blank) pinch point exposure was to occur. Because pinch points are so common, we may not even realize that we are placing ourselves or others at risk, but these types of exposures result in some of the most

frequent types of injuries at IPSC. Understanding the various tasks we perform as part of our jobs, how do we determine if these exposures are minor or if they have potential for Significant Injury or Fatality (SIF)?

My mind quickly recalls the time when I almost lost two fingers on my left hand. Before working at IPSC, I was a concrete finisher and spent nearly a decade working on residential concrete projects and large-scale civil projects around the western United States.



Pinch Points...Potential SIF or Not?—Casey Draper, cont.

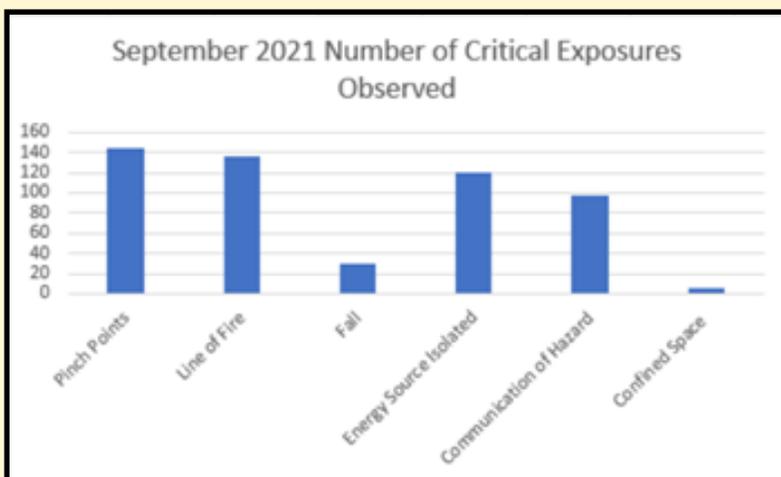
While performing a renovation project on a concrete approach leading into a parking lot, I was injured and thought that I had severed my fingers.

It was a typical workday where I worked with two others using hand tools, a jackhammer attachment on a skid loader, and a 580 Case backhoe to break out and haul off chunks of concrete. We had a good working system and the project was going smoothly. The skid loader operator broke up the concrete and the backhoe operator scooped up the large pieces. That day my task was to load the small concrete pieces into the bucket of the backhoe by hand. Trying to be efficient, I guided the backhoe operator close to me and—rather than picking up and throwing the concrete pieces—I bent over to swing the concrete chunks into the bucket. This worked quite well until I swung one of the concrete chunks at the same time the operator tipped the bucket of the backhoe slightly changing its position. With the weight and momentum of the concrete chunk, the fingers on my left hand were smashed between the concrete and the cutting edge of the backhoe bucket. I immediately felt the pain of my fingers being smashed and my glove filling up with

warm blood. I was scared to look at my hand or take off my glove. The backhoe operator quickly rushed out of the cab to help me and assess the damage, convincing me to take off my glove to evaluate the injury. Luckily my fingers were still attached, but they looked like they'd gone through a meat grinder. I ended up receiving several stitches and losing the use of my left hand for several weeks. I consider myself lucky because I personally know several individuals who have had similar injuries and lost a finger or two.

While pinch points are common exposures in the workplace, we can become more aware of their potential for injury and be mindful of their severity through hazard identification. Not every pinch point has the potential for a life-changing or life-altering event, but most everyone can quickly recall a time when they shouldn't have placed their hands or fingers in such a vulnerable place—similar to a child touching a hot stove for the first time. While wearing PPE is an important step in protecting ourselves and others, hazard elimination may be the best step to keeping our hands and fingers out of harm's way.

VOLTS Data Report—Casey Draper



IPSC Employee Observation Quality



IPSC Employee Contact Rate

1.22

Safety Performance Measure

Maintain the Contact Rate of 1 on a Monthly Basis

September: SIF Count

8