



FMG HAZARD ALERT Using Bungee Cord/Straps

Location: Canfor Woodlands Operations
Date of Incidents: May 2014

Details:

On May 22, one of our Field Operations staff received an eye injury from using a bungee cord to tighten down the lid of his personal Rubbermaid tote. As they were attaching the second end to the bin, the first end snapped off and hit them on the forehead and left eye. They felt intense pain and lost vision for a moment, followed by blurry vision. They also sustained a small cut above the eye on the forehead. The crew returned to town, notified their supervisor immediately, and decision was made to go to emergency to have the eye examined.

Luckily, the employee did not sustain any severe injury to the eye. The small cut was glued with first aid glue. The employee did see an eye specialist the following day to further examine the eye, but no damage was observed. The employee was prescribed steroid drops for swelling and redness in the eye.

Hazard Information:

Using bungee cords/straps to tie down tote box lids; gear in the back of FMG trucks or even in our personal lives, exposes us to significant risk to an injury. The hazard of a bungee cord is the stored energy which can be suddenly released. The stretched rubber exerts a tremendous amount of force when it recoils, particularly when it's stretched beyond the recommended limits. The free end of the cord can recoil at speeds up to 100 kph and cause significant injury or damage upon impact.

Consequences - Injuries

Studies show that the majority of bungee cord injuries involves the eye and are becoming an increasingly common cause of both severe and penetrating eye injuries. These injuries include bleeding within the eye, lacerations to the eye, traumatic cataracts and tearing or detachment of the retina from the back of the eye. Most victims with damaged eyes had a mild-to-serious loss of vision, some had no useful vision.

FMG Actions:

- Immediately, FMG will provide any Field Staff a sturdy Action Packer type Rubbermaid tote that has a clasping locked lid
- Bungee cords are not to be used for strapping tote lids. Bungee cords are not to be used for tying down gear in the back of truck or on ATV/sleds. An alternate solution is to replace bungee cords with low-stretch high-tensile straps, such as those shown below
- Discuss this incident and learnings with your team, and make sure that all staff understand the risk, and are using the appropriate totes and tools



This incident is reminder to all of us to take the time not just at work, but in our personal life to consider how we carry out the simple day to day tasks. I'm sure we all use these tools in our personal life, for recreation, in and around our houses and yards for a variety of things.

Please consider these actions and take them home with you.

If you do use bungee cords/straps outside work, please follow these best practices:

- **Wear eye protection during connection and disconnection of cords**
- **Inspect hooks for straightening, deformation, corrosion or other damage prior to use**
- **Inspect cords/strap for dry rot, cuts or nicks or other signs of damage prior to use.**
- **Destroy and discard any damaged tarp straps or hooks**
- **Secure hook ends by using a firm grip on the strap and hook**
- **Keep your face and other vulnerable body parts out of the line of fire of the strap's rebound path**
- **Keep other people out of the line of fire**
- **Stretch the strap to a maximum safe stretch of 50% of the length of the strap.**
- **Avoid over tensioning**
- **Store tarp straps when not in use in a dry location out of direct sunlight.**
- **As with any hand tool, it is important to select the proper tool for the task and understand how to use the tool safely**

For more information, please call: Kerri Simmons, 250-962-3456