Facial Injury Due to retracting Bungee Cord

Incident Details

During fieldwork, elastic bungee cords (also known as “occy straps”) were being used to restrain equipment on the roof rack of a vehicle.

Whilst attaching the cord the cord failed and retracted back with the hook hitting a person between the eyes resulting in a minor open wound.

Contributing Factors

Field work is frequently completed by this group of researchers and, to date, bungee cords had been their method to restrain equipment and samples to the roof racks on the vehicle. It had not been identified as a hazardous practice and thus not been documented in their risk assessments for the work. They had not experienced any injuries to date.

There have been no recent campaigns to remind the community of the hazards associated with the use of bungee cords.

Other contributing factors are that Bungee cords are inexpensive and readily available.

Key Learnings and Recommendations

All of the team’s bungee cords have now been replaced by tie down straps (non-elastic).

All workers (and the community) need to be reminded of the hazards associated with the use of bungee cords and the risk of serious eye injury associated with the failure of a bungee cord.

To better understand the hazard associated with the use of bungee cords see the following clips:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=k8ty8AmOXew
https://youtu.be/K03AkJyWWJA

Could this happen anywhere your staff, students or you are working?

This alert is a reminder for you and your work unit to consider the effectiveness of your local safety management system in preventing an incident like this from occurring at a workplace.

Additional Information

For further information, contact your local Work Health and Safety Manager/Coordinator, or the UQ HSW Division.

Contact the HSW Division: Phone: +61 7 336-52365      Email: ohs@uq.edu.au