

Safety Flash - Incident with injury

Incident: While using a skid steer to clear slush from a roadway, an associate struck an unmarked manhole in an area that was not topped with asphalt. He was thrown into the safety bar, injuring his ribs.

Possible Contributing Factors:

- The manhole was not visible because it was covered in slush and the cone marking it had been moved.
- It was the associate's third day on site and he had been working indoors, so he may not have been familiar with the site.
- It was his last task before going home.
- He was not wearing his seat belt.
- The manholes are in locations with significant truck traffic, requiring cones to be moved and returned frequently.
- The paving subcontractor had placed the base coat of asphalt, but was too busy to place the top coat.
- The weather had varied between rain, sleet and snow all day, creating slush on and around manholes, trailers and walkways.
- The weather affected site work, delaying paving operations.

Primary contributing factors:

- The manhole was not visible because it was covered in slush and the cone marking it had been moved.
- The manholes are in locations with significant truck traffic, requiring cones to be moved and returned frequently.

Possible solutions:

- Consider different marking plans for paving operations.
- Consider having the paving crew roll asphalt up to manholes to eliminate raised manholes and the need to place stone around raised manholes.
- Reroute traffic around unpaved areas if possible.
- Make sure uncovered manholes are marked with signage.
- Take time to review new tasks, consider any hazards in your work area and update STACs.
- Communicate the requirement to wear seat belts at all times in equipment.

Action plan:

- The importance of wearing seat belts, maintaining barricades and manhole covers will be communicated throughout the company.
- RLI will investigate other marking options for manholes, in addition to barricades and covers.
- The jobsite will talk with paving crews before they begin to roll up pavement.

Keep improving

Your health and safety are our core value on every project. If you see a way we can support you in keeping our job sites safe, see your supervisor or contact: Jim Philo, 419/654-2043; Rich Franklin, Michigan, 734/679-7283; Alan Doane, Cleveland, 440/429-0639; Rick Wallace, Lima, 419/705-9170 or Mark Hoffman, 419/360-9280.

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