

# SAFETY MATTERS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022

## SAFETY THAT FITS LIKE A GLOVE

Take care of your hands by using the proper glove for each task

A recent hand injury that occurred when an associate picked up some concrete spoils prompted RLI safety leaders to re-examine its glove options.

Gloves are ANSI rated for cut resistance on a scale of A 1-9, with 9 having the highest resistance. The gray gloves in the photo are A-3, the darker blue gloves are A-4 and the light blue gloves are A-5. These gloves were identified as appropriate for most tasks RLI associates will perform and are in stock.

The yellow gloves are for cold weather and are in stock, but not cut resistant.

The injured worker was wearing what was then the proper glove for the task.

## HYDRO-EXCAVATION

Method helps workers safely determine what is underground

The use of a hydro-excavator at St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center in Toledo helped RLI associates first focus on safety and then complete the work for customers.

Removing a tree seems like straightforward work. But high-voltage electrical conduits were right under the large tree outside the medical center. Simply taking it down and grinding the roots was too dangerous and would interfere with hospital operations.

A hydro-excavator was brought in to physically expose the roots and visually confirm they were not intertwined with the electrical feeds. A hydro-excavator uses water and suction to propel material into a nearby vacuum truck.

Another job required installing

“However, after further evaluation, it was determined that this specific task requires the use of gloves that provide needle-puncture resistance, not just cut resistance, as the concrete spoils contain steel fibers,” said RLI Safety Specialist **Alan Lotozynski**.

Several glove models of various needle-puncture resistance levels were evaluated on-site by project team members and one candidate, A-5, provided the highest level of protection for this task.

“We were looking for a glove option that provided a high-level of needle puncture resistance and we successfully identified one,” Lotozynski said. “We now stock



these gloves in the yard for that specific task.”

There is a wider variety of gloves at GEM because the tasks differ. There are gloves for general purposes, welding and cutting, electrical work, and for heat, chemical and cut resistance. For more information, check out the Hand Protection pdf on the GEM Intranet page at Templates>GEM Safety>General>Gloves.

Associates should evaluate the tasks ahead of them to determine what type of gloves they need. If unsure, check with the appropriate RLG safety professional.



Above: The long vacuum hose eliminated the need to dig by hand. Right: The tree roots exposed by the hydro-excavator.

**Physically locating the underground utility safely is the most important reason for using this tool.**

underground utilities inside the hospital. Workers removed 10 cubic yards of material by using a long remote hose attached to a hydro-excavation vacuum truck outside the worksite. That eliminated the potential hazard of striking existing underslab conduit through conventional digging. An added bonus



was not having to hand dig – and cart wheelbarrows loaded with dirt through a busy hospital.

“Hydro-excavation improves safety because we can physically see exactly what we are dealing with,” said Project Manager **Rob Wissolik**. “Utilizing as-built drawings, ground penetrating radar and interviewing veteran maintenance staff are all necessary steps to plan our excavation, but physically locating the underground utility safely is the most important reason for using this tool.”



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## IN THE TRENCHES

### Safety at excavation sites starts with a discussion with equipment vendor

In 2020's first six months, OSHA recorded 22 fatalities related to trenching and excavation work. There were 15 in all of 2021. That has prompted the federal safety agency to place a national emphasis on trenching and excavation work, including more than 1,000 unannounced excavation site inspections.

RLI and excavation equipment vendor Pro-Tec Equipment of Westland, Michigan, have worked together for more than a decade to make sure the worksite is as safe as possible. RLI rents equipment from Pro-Tech such as trench boxes and slide rail systems. But it's just not a question of equipment, RLI Sitework Superintendent **Kevin Burtchin** said.

"What makes this work for us is the relationship we have with Pro-Tec General Manager Joe Cook," Burtchin said. "When we have a unique excavation, Joe and I can share ideas and his team always helps us come up with the best solution so that our teams in the field are successful."

## FIND IT, FIX IT

### Everyone home in same condition as when they left for work

**Unsafe behavior:** Associate entered permitted confined space without PPE.

**Solution:** Associate was stopped and educated on confined space requirements.

**Unsafe act:** While pouring walls, an associate noticed the concrete truck was getting too close to the edge of a hole.

**Solution:** The associate stopped the pour and had the truck reposition away from excavation.

**Unsafe behavior:** A subcontractor was in a scissor lift without a harness.

**Solution:** The subcontractor was asked to come down and fall protection rules were explained to him.

**Unsafe condition:** While working near an electrical disconnect that was locked out, associate found the key to the lock on top of a disconnect that fit the lock used to lock out the switch.

**Solution:** Associate contacted safety and called the person's name that was on the key.



The discussion includes questions about the depth of the excavation site, what it is being used for, the size of pipe being installed and what type of machine will be used to install/extract the shoring equipment. Questions about type of soil, ground water presence, adjacent structures or utilities and overhead lines may be asked.

After those issues are addressed, the discussion will move on to what type of shoring methods are appropriate.

"It has become crystal clear that RLI does have a culture that promotes and embraces safety. I don't sense at all that the word 'safety' is a buzzword for RLI," Cook said.

"It seems as if Kevin Burtchin and the team



## SAFETY TOOL SPOTLIGHT

### The Foot In - No Spin Rolling Bucket

A cleaner job site is a safer job site. The "Foot In - No Spin" bucket is designed with a cut-out for your foot (or a 2 x 4) on the job-site to hold while mixing liquids or semi-liquids so bucket does not tip or spin. It is ideal for thin-set paint, joint compound, mortar, tile grout, or cement. Submitted by Masonary General Superintendent **Don Brighton**.



RLI workers use a variety of methods and equipment for excavating.

Recent projects requiring excavation include the Promedica pneumatic tube project (30-foot deep slide rail), Mopar waterline tap (16-foot deep jack and bore pits on both sides of Stickney Avenue), and a current project at a large site in Wood County with a 12-foot deep excavation of a damaged sanitary sewer under the finished building floor.

utilize our equipment as not only a means of safety but also as a means of productivity. I know when I have visited RLI projects in the past, it appears neat and orderly.

"The experience of the crew and RLI's willingness to do things the right way definitely lead to a safer job site."

## INEOS CELEBRATES 1,000 SAFE DAYS

### Company marks occasion with free lunch for GEM associates

INEOS recently recognized GEM associates for 1,000 safe days worked by springing for lunch.

The luncheon was held Sept. 1 in the Safety Garage and featured ribs, baked potatoes, vegetables and rolls. Night shift was also provided with the same meal.

The chemical manufacturer said GEM workers' continued commitment to the INEOS' Culture of Prevention was key to reaching the milestone.

"We anticipate that this culture has created an environment where our workers, employees and contractors, look out for each other to ensure everyone goes home safe every day," said INEOS Safety Engineer Josh Leer. "We are looking forward to many more safe years being worked on site."