

HAZARD ALERT

DEMOLITION PROJECTS: CHANGING WORKPLACES WITH CHANGING HAZARDS

A worker crushed his hand when the pipe he was cutting with a torch suddenly fell, pinning his hand between the upper and lower sections. A section of the pipe he was working on had been removed the previous day, reducing the structural integrity of the lower section.

Demolition project sites are constantly changing and, as a result, so do the hazards. Workplaces that change from hour to hour present a challenge for employers and employees alike. Proper job planning and hazard assessment can prevent injuries.

Examples of demolition hazards include:

- Material and debris removal through floor and roof openings.
- Inadequate shoring to maintain the structural integrity of buildings.
- Improper identification of utility locations.
- Inadequate signage and lighting.
- Use of hand and power tools and welding equipment.
- Catch platforms and falling materials.

WorkSafeNB Recommends the Following Preventive Action

- Have detailed demolition plans.
- Hold regular tool box safety meetings and encourage participation.
- Conduct frequent and regular worksite inspections.
- Ensure supervisors are able to identify and control hazards.
- Ensure employees are properly trained and instructed in their required tasks.
- Reduce exposure to hazardous materials such as asbestos, lead and PCBs.
- Perform hazard identification and job task analysis for each new challenge.
- Provide the personal protective equipment required by the Regulation.

