

## The theme this month is Packaging Safety

Line of fire injuries are prevalent throughout all manufacturing industries. Plastic pipe manufacturing is no exception. The more employees put their hands on equipment or products, the higher the exposure potential to injury. The highest employee to product or equipment contact ratio throughout most plastic pipe manufacturing facilities occurs during the packaging of finished goods.

Employee exposure to hazards will differ depending on the type of equipment and product that is being used/manufactured. For example, there are more moving pieces and a higher potential exposure to injury while running coils or reels when compared to stick pipe. However, automatic coilers will relieve much of the need for employees to contact product throughout the packaging of finished goods.

### Where does the packaging process take place?

- The act of packaging itself will generally take place at the end of a production line usually on a trailer, cradle, reeling or coiling machine. The packaging process continues until the pipe is banded and transported for storage or loading.
- The packaging process also includes the preparation of boards or banding for packaging purposes.

### Common injuries or hazardous situations encountered while packaging

- Potential for falling coils
- Line of fire between stick pipe coming off a dump table onto a trailer/cradle
- Trailer/cradle failures
- Lacerations from metal banding or while cutting packaging boards
- Strains from bending or lifting
- Contusions or lacerations from loose coil or reel ends and various pinch points



### Safe practices to reduce injuries or hazardous situations while packaging product

- Never leave single coils un-attended, if a single coil must be temporarily stored, consider using a coil rack or tipper to ensure you've eliminated the potential for that coil to fall unexpectedly.
- Consider automatically actuated dump arm stops.
- Ensure trailer jacks are in good shape, consider adding additional legs to trailers to catch the trailer should a jack fail.
- Get away from metal banding where possible, consider alternative banding materials. If metal banding must be used, evaluate the option for an automated cut-to-length strap dispenser. Ensure employees are thoroughly trained on the use of banders!

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- Consider ordering packaging boards pre-cut.
- Limit employee lifting load to 50lbs or less and implement an ergonomics program to help employees identify safe lifting practices.
- Establish “go and no go” zones to keep employees out of the line of fire should a coil or reel tail come loose. These zones should be visibly designated.
- Enforce the use of high visibility gloves during packaging tasks to help bring attention to hand placement and help employees avoid pinch points.



The committee will work towards more specific guidelines in relation to coiling, reeling, bundles, etc in packaging in the coming months. If you have [input](#) on certain areas of concern or would like to contribute to this work please reach out to PPI and [volunteer](#) .

### PPI Packaging Resources:

PPI's *Material Handling Guide* is available at [Material Handling Guide](#) on the website in the public Safety section.



### Safety Minute of the Month: Working Safely in Cold Weather

Winter weather can expose outdoor workers to frostbite, hypothermia, and cold stress, all of which can be fatal. It is important to know the wind chill temperature to better prepare and perform the work safely.

Follow these work practices to stay safe in cold weather:

- Know the symptoms of cold stress; reddening skin, tingling, pain, swelling, leg cramps, numbness, and blisters.
- Dress properly; wear at least three layers of loose-fitting clothing, insulated gloves and boots, and cover your head.
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers.
- Stay dry and pack extra clothes; moisture can increase heat loss from the body.
- Take frequent breaks in warm, dry areas.
- Drink warm liquids.



For more safety tips, visit OSHA's [Winter Weather](#) page.

### **Reminder - Recordable Tracking and Sharing of Corrective Actions:**

PPI is encouraging your company to participate in this monthly report. Background on this process and the template are attached for your reference. Questions should be directed to David Fink at [dfink@plasticpipe.org](mailto:dfink@plasticpipe.org). We look forward to your company's participation so that together we can support each other in continuous improvement of our safety performance.

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## Reporting Trends Feb'21 through Nov'21:

