

FACILITY ALERT

BACKGROUND

Please be advised of a recent incident whereby an ice resurfacers erupted into flames during the flooding process in an Ontario recreation facility. The incident was without injury or loss of life, however, it does draw attention to the need for regular, comprehensive, inspection of all equipment in the workplace by all workers.

FACTS

- It was determined that the fire was caused from a pin sized leak in a hydraulic hose created from repetitive movement along the conditioning unit;
- The fluid being released out of the hose was under pressure, creating an atomizing effect, resulting in a fine mist, which then was ignited by the heated exhaust system;
- The driver, a 30-year veteran, detecting the fire, shut the unit off, immediately stopping the flow of fuel to the existing fire, thus, diverting a possible larger emergency situation;
- He then proceeded to evacuate the building
- The community involved was known to have a detailed daily logged inspection system in place for workers to follow on all ice resurfacers, as well as, an annual inspection process by a licensed mechanic;
- It has since closely inspected all its ice resurfacing equipment for other possible worn hoses as well as placing a protective shield between any hose and metal situation to reduce further or possible wear;
- This situation is believed to be an isolated incident, caused by an aged and worn hydraulic hose - no known recall has been issued at this time;

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- All facility managers/operators should immediately inspect all existing ice resurfacers hydraulic hoses for wear, replacing any suspect equipment. Workers unfamiliar with such inspections should seek outside expertise to assist;
- All staff should be trained to identify worn equipment, implementing a "stop work" when unsafe equipment is detected until the situation is corrected;
- Such inspections should immediately be added to the daily inspection log requirements of all operations;
- Fire suppression for such situations should be reviewed with all employees so that they are prepared to handle such situations should they occur. Reaction by staff should include the immediate stopping of the engine by turning off the ignition;
- A 20-lb ABC chemical fire extinguisher should be available in all ice resurfacers rooms. It is important to note that such equipment will suppress a fire but has no cooling affect. A fine mist of cold water should be used to cool any fuel tanks to ensure a "bleve" (boiling liquid expanding vapour explosion) does not occur;
- If a fire is of a serious nature, activate the fire alarm to begin the evacuation process from the facility as soon as possible;
- Evacuation procedures should be implemented, waiting for the "Fire Chief" to provide the "All Clear" prior to allowing anyone back into the facility;
- If the incident occurs on the ice, ice depth readings should be conducted in the area of the fire and recorded as safe in the ice log prior to being used by any skating patron;
- Equipment should be considered to be returned to the manufacturer for a detailed inspection prior to being placed back into service.

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