

Lessons Learned



— MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS —

Date: 8/10/2023

Region: Mountain – Reno Division

Project: American Battery Technology Center (ABTC)

Incident Title: Sulfuric Acid Spill

Summary

Savage and Sons Plumbing removed a pipe yesterday at ABTC without complying with the ABTC line break procedure. Savage & Sons did not check if the pipe was empty. They cut the pipe with a Sawzall, and sulfuric acid drained onto the floor. ABTC did not notify anyone of the spill.

ABTC stated they would forward their incident report and pictures to Apollo Safety today.

What Went Right

- Upon noticing the spill, the Apollo crew of two (2) shut down their job & vacated the area.
- The Apollo crew notified ABTC management of the spill as well as their decision to stop work for the remainder of the shift and returned to the shop.
- The Apollo crew notified Apollo Safety after returning to the shop. Medical examination was refused by both team members.
- The Apollo crew reported to Apollo Safety symptoms with scratchy throat, nasal congestion, and slight chest tightness. No chest pain, wheezing or cough.
- Apollo Safety sent the team to Renown health for diagnosis.
- The team was released to full duty with a follow up visit scheduled for 8/17/2023.
- Apollo Safety facilitated a fact- finding meeting today at 11:30. Two PMs, Safety Manager, GF, & the crew attended this meeting.
- ABTC facilitated a meeting today at 1:00 p.m. to discuss the incident and tour the location of the spill. The meeting was attended by the PM, Safety Manager, GF, & the crew.

What Went Wrong?

- ABTC did not know a pipe contained sulfuric acid.
- The sulfuric acid pipe was **not** labeled.
- Savage & Sons did not follow ABTC's line break procedure.
- Savage & Sons did not open the pipe's drain to ascertain if the pipe was empty.
- Savage & Sons cut the pipe with a Sawzall and allowed the sulfuric acid to drain onto the floor.
- The sulfuric acid flowed under an open portion of a metal wall into the area where the Apollo Team was working.
- Savage & Sons did not report the spill.
- The Apollo Team worked without knowledge of the spill.
- It has been 22.5 hours since the spill and ABTC has not sent Apollo an incident report.

Lessons Learned

- It is not what we teach, it is what we tolerate.
- Apollo Family Members will take the initiative to stop work, report a hazardous condition to the client's management and return to the shop for the remainder of their shift.
- Apollo Family Members will promptly inform Apollo Safety of an incident and/or work stoppage.
- Situational awareness is a key safety factor.
- This is the third incident within a year where another sub-contractor's personnel caused a hazardous condition but did not report it.
- A meeting with key Apollo Family Members assists in disseminating the incident facts.