



SAFETY ALERT #39



July 5, 2010

In the interest of keeping everyone safe CAMSAFETY will be sharing injury information with preliminary root cause analysis. This information is intended to make you think not assess blame. If you have an incident that you would like to share send us the information and we will pass it along.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER EXPLODES

What Happened

A fire extinguisher (top picture - left) was attached to a bulldozer in a typical metal holder (lower pictures). The bolts which held the bracket in place, over time, wore the tank to the failure point. The extinguisher tank failed and exploded. The extinguisher tore out of the holder and flew nearly 100 feet. Although this incident occurred at night when the job was not active and no one was injured the potential is enormous. Subsequent inspections of all fire extinguishers on the project found several with significant wear and stress cracking (top picture – right). This wear found during the inspections was caused by the securing bolts, straps and bottom of bracket. Additional problems were discovered with extinguishers that were corroded in various places on the tank, particularly the bottoms. This problem is particular prevalent with extinguishers attached to moving equipment as in this case.



Actual Bracket Involved
Arrows point to bolt location



Prevention:

- MIOSHA Part 18 “Fire Protection and Prevention” states “An extinguisher shall be inspected monthly, or at more frequent intervals when circumstances require
- When conducting an inspection check for external damage, corrosion and stress cracks. In the case discussed above the damage caused by the bolts would have been hard to see while the extinguisher was in the holder. The units should be removed so that all surfaces can be checked.
- Check that the pressure gauge is in the green area and that the pin is still in-place and secured with a tie-wrap.
- Defective or damaged extinguishers should be immediately removed from service and discharged if appropriate.
- All inspections must be recorded and available for inspection by either a MIOSHA compliance officer or a representative of the local fire authority.