



Split-Rim Wheel Assemblies – Utility Hand Cart

Hazard

Maintaining tires and wheels is a routine, but very important chore. The occurrence below shows that small tires and wheels can be just as dangerous as heavy equipment assemblies.

A small – 8” diameter – wheel on a utility handcart was seized. The employee decided to remove the wheel to free it on the axle and lubricate it. Not realizing the rim was of the two-piece, split type variety, he removed the mounting bolts, allowing the rim to blow apart.

Fortunately, in this case, there was no injury or property damage involved, but split-rim wheels have caused fatalities both in Canada and in the United States.

Prevention

- Audit all wheel and tire assemblies and identify the rim types in use.
- Review the manufacturer’s procedures for maintaining all makes and types of wheels and tires in use.
- Establish a policy of deflating all tires by removing the valve core prior to loosening and fasteners or beginning disassembly.
- Follow appropriate, safe procedures for inflating all types of tires and use a wheel cage or standoff inflation device.

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