

PROJECT:	
CLIENT/OWNER:	WEEK ENDING:

CREW NAMES:	CREW SIGNATURES:
SAFETY FACTORS ON CURRENT PROJECT:	
WEEKLY FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT:	
FOREMAN:	SIGNATURE:

Hand-Arm Vibration

Have you ever had a tingling sensation in your hands after operating a weed trimmer? That tingling is a very mild form of Vibration-induced White Finger (VWF) or Raynaud's phenomenon. Vibration to the extremities can cause constriction of blood vessels and affect nerves and muscles. In moderate cases, personnel can lose dexterity and sensation in their fingers and hands. In severe cases, the constriction reduces blood flow to the fingers, causing them to turn white. In the most extreme cases, VWF can actually lead to the loss of fingers.

Two factors are primary contributors to this occupational hazard: cold and vibration.

Cold temperatures cause the body to pull blood into the core, resulting in similar symptoms to VWF. Severe extremity vibration, such as the operation of a jack hammer, is a clear hazard; however, even lesser vibration can have a negative effect. Small vibrations over long periods of time can be just as hazardous as large vibrations for short durations. Some examples would be operating a hand drill on an assembly line or operating hand controls on shuddering equipment.

How to protect personnel:

- **Anti-vibration Tools:** Many tool manufactures are producing lines of tools that absorb a great deal of the vibration output. This is a good purchase for jobs that require long periods of use.
- **Anti-vibration Gloves:** There are many lines of gloves made with vibration absorbing padding or gel in the palm and fingers. These gloves not only absorb vibration, but also keep the fingers warm, further protecting against VWF. This is an excellent preventive measure when different tools are used throughout the workday (construction sites) or when it is not practicable to stop the vibration in the equipment (large or complex equipment).

- **Proper Work Practices:** It is possible to minimize exposure to vibration by establishing work practices that:

- » 1) Keep the worker and the hands warm during tasks.
- » 2) Prevent vibration coupling between the worker and the vibrating mechanism.
- » 3) Allow for frequent breaks when using vibrating tools or equipment. •