



Safety Alert No. 487

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## **BSEE Alerts Offshore Workers to Trend of Recurring Hand Injuries While Using Alternative Cutting Devices**

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) has observed a trend of safety incidents related to improper use of alternative cutting devices. When using any alternative cutting device, it is critical to follow safe work practices to prevent worker injury or damage to property. Misuse of these alternative cutting devices often leads to injury, emphasizing the need for future continuous vigilance and strict adherence to safety protocols. Alternative cutting devices that have been damaged or altered should be discarded. BSEE is informing workers and providing recommendations to help prevent future injuries.



Figure 1 - Damaged alternative cutting device and cut glove.



Figure 2 - Exposed blade on alternative cutting device.

### **Recent incidents include the following:**

**Incident 1:** While running a new cable in a cable tray, an offshore worker was using a cutter to remove previously installed zip ties. Although the protective tip of the cutter was damaged, exposing the blade, the offshore worker continued to use the damaged cutting device. The exposed blade cut through the worker's glove, causing a laceration on the left hand between the thumb and index finger (Figure 1).

**Incident 2:** An offshore worker sustained a laceration to the back of their hand, between the thumb and index finger, while cutting zip ties. The incident occurred when the cutting device rebounded, causing the injury. It was found that the protective guard over the blade was missing, leaving the blade exposed (Figure 2).

**BSEE recommends that operators and their contractors, where appropriate, consider doing the following:**

- Ensure all personnel identify the appropriate alternative cutting device in the Job Safety Analysis for the assigned task.
- Inspect the alternative cutting device before use to confirm that the protective shielding is free from wear or chips and that it is properly installed.
- Ensure personnel do not alter or modify alternative cutting devices before use.
- Ensure personnel use cut resistant gloves for added protection when utilizing alternative cutting devices.
- Ensure that if the alternative cutting device is defective in any way, the cutting device is discarded appropriately.

– BSEE –

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.

**Category: Hand Injury**