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# WORKER INJURED DURING HYDRO-VAC OPERATIONS

## DESCRIPTION:

A worker excavating frozen soil using a seven-foot straight tip wand, received a surface laceration and minor burn to the top of the foot. The worker's right foot became stuck in mud, causing the worker to stumble and move the wand on top of his foot. The high-pressure water cut the boot above the protective steel toe.



1 - WORKER LOST FOOTING (LEFT). 2 - WORKERS RUBBER BOOT AFTER IMPACT (RIGHT)

## CAUSE:

The worker was wearing rubber steel toe boots that did not provide adequate protection from the hot, high pressure water (65°C at 2000 PSI).

## CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:

The wand was not equipped with a handle for proper hand placement and did not have a shut-off valve.

## CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

- » Communicate to hydro-vac contractors the need for metatarsal foot protection when using a straight tip wand
- » Hydro-vac contractors should use wands with handles that provide adequate grip and a method to stop the flow of water at the wand
- » Owners, prime contractors and employers should assess each scope of work for its specific hazards; ensure proper communication to the work force when changing conditions require specialized personal protective equipment