



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Engineering and Support Center,
Huntsville

Safety Office

Mishap Lessons Learned



Subject: Laceration to Thumb

Event: A roofing contractor was working on metal curbs where HVAC line sets penetrate the roof. The contractor removed the metal curb cover and reached under the line sets to remove the temporary plastic sheeting that was held in place with duct tape. While he was pulling on the plastic sheeting to remove it, he over exerted and his hand struck the counter flashing of the metal curb resulting in a laceration to his thumb which required 5 sutures. The contractor reported he was wearing cut resistant gloves at the time of the incident.



Counter flashing involved with arrow indicating location.

Root Cause: Unsafe job practices. The worker failed to remove the plastic sheeting safely with scissors or a utility knife.

Indirect Cause: Failure to follow procedures. The contractor performed work without informing the SSSH.

Lessons Learned: Use the proper tool. Pulling/ripping off material requires a lot of force, and the material could release suddenly and cause injury. Cutting material with a knife or scissors requires less force and is less likely to suddenly release.

Recommendations: Ensure workers are trained in hazard recognition & proper work procedures. Use proper gloves for the task.