



# SafetyLetter

February 2009

**A service technician was called to service a dispenser** at a busy retail service station. The dispenser would not reset or turn on while other pumps dispensing the same product were working, so the manager of the station would not allow the technician to power off the dispenser (thereby shutting down all unleaded pumps). The service technician, assuming that the problem was in the dispenser reset, noticed a product leak around the meter and pilot valves during visual inspection. While preparing to perform the service work, the technician opened the power reset and an explosion occurred. The explosion blew the reset apart, shattered the service technician's glasses and engulfed the dispenser in flames. The fire department was needed to extinguish the flames, which completely destroyed the dispenser. The service technician suffered severe burns to his face and hands. The service technician could have prevented the accident by informing the station owner of the leaking meter and pilot valves (the apparent source of the explosion's fuel) and by cutting power to the dispenser before following proper lockout/tagout procedures.

**An employee was performing routine maintenance on an air compressor** which did not have guards around the belts or flywheel. While working on the compressor, it became energized and began pulling the employee's hand, pinching it between the belts and the flywheel. As a result of the accident, the employee suffered cuts and abrasions, and required 15 stitches. The accident could have been prevented through proper power isolation by following proper lockout/tagout procedures.

**A service technician was called to calibrate the pumps at a 10-hose station.** The technician used a metal funnel in the fill pipe of a regular-grade tank as a matter of convenience but because the funnel was low to the ground and hard to see, he forgot to remove it and it was crushed by a driver entering the station. Although no one was hurt, the equipment was destroyed. The accident could have prevented if the area were properly barricaded or the funnel had been removed after use.

**Two service technicians were working at a convenience store on a rainy night and had pulled a submersible pump for repair.** The technicians moved the entire submersible pump assembly on to a sidewalk under the convenience store canopy to ensure a dry workspace. While one of the technicians was working on the head of the submersible pump, a driver entering the area struck the technician from behind, propelling him headfirst into a canopy support pole. The technician missed one day of work and suffered a broken tailbone and a concussion as a result of the accident. Although the technician was dressed in a bright yellow rain suit and was elevated on a sidewalk in a well lit area, the work area should also have been barricaded with service vehicles.

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Material in the SafetyLetter is contributed by PEI members from actual accidents with which they are familiar. You are encouraged to submit accident reports as they occur. Your company will not be identified in any way, please call PEI at (918) 494-9696 or email Chris Bouldin at [cbouldin@pei.org](mailto:cbouldin@pei.org)

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