

# Hydraulic Leaks: Never Search with Your Hands

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## Why this matters

A fine hydraulic jet can inject fluid through skin. A small puncture may conceal serious injury, and stopping the engine may leave pressure trapped in the system.

Objective: Recognize a suspected hydraulic leak and verify safe referral before approach.

## Key hazards or failure points

Fluid injection; hot fluid; stored pressure; incompatible fittings; unexpected attachment movement during repair.

## Practical controls

- Keep hands and body away from suspected jets. Stop affected work, isolate access and report the defect through the equipment procedure.
- Only authorized personnel perform diagnosis or repair using the manufacturer's procedure, energy controls and suitable equipment. Do not loosen fittings to find pressure.
- Treat suspected injection as a medical emergency: obtain immediate professional medical care and tell responders it may be high-pressure fluid injection.

## Verify It in the Field

From outside the potential release area, identify the affected equipment and report the observed condition. Do not approach to obtain a better look.

Before maintenance exposure, have the authorized person confirm the isolation and stored-pressure verification record for the actual circuit and task.

Confirm how help is summoned and where fluid identification or the SDS can be obtained safely. Never delay medical care while collecting documents.

## Stop and reassess

Hold affected equipment for leaks, damaged hoses, uncertain pressure or unverified repair. Keep clear during authorized testing; restart requires the prescribed acceptance and release.

## Ask the crew

1. Where could pressure remain?
2. Who can verify the circuit is safe?
3. What would we tell emergency responders?

Use this HOP tool — Validate assumptions: Name one assumption that could make the leak seem harmless, such as believing a stopped engine removes all pressure. Identify the authorized person and procedure that can establish the actual condition. Keep the affected task held while that evidence is obtained.

Sources: HSE/HSENI hydraulic guidance; OSHA 1910.147; DOE Vol. 2, pp. 22–23. HOP concepts adapted from DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2 (June 2009). No claim to original U.S. Government work; no government endorsement implied.

Free next step: JHA/JSA planning and field-verification worksheet

Expanded guidance and separate forms: [toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/hydraulic-injection-leak-response](https://toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/hydraulic-injection-leak-response)