

# Chico Enterprise Record

## One injured in explosion at company on Otterson Drive

By GREG WELTER - Staff Writer

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An Otterson Drive company was evacuated Thursday afternoon following an accident that moderately injured one employee.

The business, AMT Chemical Coating Technologies, was cleared of employees about 12:30 p.m. when an explosion was heard and a supervisor pulled a fire alarm.

A man who told paramedics his name is Gil Mojica was making lacquer in the corner of a production room of the plant. He was in the process of adding a 30-gallon barrel of wax flakes to a 1,000-gallon vat containing acetone when the mixture exploded.

As he scrambled down from a 5-foot work platform, Mojica reportedly dropped the barrel of flakes, which became lodged in the vat and caught fire.

The worker suffered flash burns to one arm and his face. He was treated at the scene, then transported to Enloe Medical Center in Chico.

Production supervisor Todd Castro called the explosion a freak accident.

Seven other employees working in the room with Mojica weren't injured.

The plant filled with caustic smoke, forcing about 40 people outside. Firefighters used fans to evacuate the smoke, but Castro said it was unlikely production room employees would be able to return to work Thursday.

Mojica has worked at the company more than four years.

Fire officials said the business experienced a forklift explosion about two years ago. Company officials declined to give details about the forklift incident.