

NZ Safety Alert

03 April 2020

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe

Sledgehammer injures worker

Workers were changing jaw liners on a Jaw Crusher. One worker was attempting to tighten bolts used to fasten the liner to the crusher by using a sledgehammer. He was holding the hammer handle very low down, as he attempted to swing the hammer upwards to hit the bolts.

He was working in a confined space within the isolated jaw and as he reached up, he did not have enough space to complete the entire movement and the handle of the sledgehammer swung into his lower back directly behind his ribs.

The worker noticed slight discomfort but completed the task. Over coming days, he experienced increased pain and was diagnosed with a chest wall contusion requiring pain killers and time off work.



MinEx data on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the 27 months to Sept 2019 shows that 12% of all incidents (270 incidents) result in occupational injuries.

You need to ensure that:

1. Appropriate tools are used for all tasks. Torque wrenches and hydraulic tools should be considered to replace hammers and striker plates.
2. You review access to plant for maintenance including isolation, weather conditions, confined space, limited access etc.
3. Workplace inspections include behaviour and task identification to ensure tasks are carried out safely.

Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.