

Laceration to Wrist by Grinder

SITE:		
CLASSIFICATION:	ACTUAL CONSEQUENCE: Moderate	POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCE: Substantial
CONTACT DETAILS:		
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Incident Description

A contractor was cutting channels using a cordless 5 inch grinder on a plastic pit in preparation for installation. During operation the grinder has kicked back when cutting across a groove in the pit shell and the grinder blade has made contact with the workers left arm.

The worker sustained a laceration approximately 50mm in length across his left wrist. The laceration severed his ulnar nerve, ulnar artery and flexor tendon, which required three (3) days hospitalisation and surgery. The worker is expected to make a full recovery after approximately 12 weeks rehabilitation.

Due to the serious nature of the injury, the incident was notifiable. An investigation commenced which included site visits, contractor and staff interviews, and procedural and process analysis.



Preliminary Findings / Underlying Causes Findings

- Grinder did not have an auxiliary handle attached
- Grinder operation was being performed one handed, other hand was bracing the pit shell
- Grinder was not appropriately guarded, and did not have a Deadman switch
- SHEWMS 15 – Working with Plant and Power Tools was not followed

- Site had not been preserved in accordance with Section 39 of the WHS Act.
- Contractor was found using unguarded grinder during visit in the weeks after event
- Contractor did not cooperate with inspector
- Had not met notification timeframes

Outcomes

- Issued a (lifetime) Prohibition Notice to Contractor advising all power tools must be used in accordance with Manufacturer’s instructions
- Contractor stood down
- An Improvement Notice was issued to ensure Notifiable Incident reporting timeframes are met, and Contractors are aware of their obligation to preserve the site of the incident

Actions

- Contractors **must** adhere to the Prohibited and Restricted Items list – This procedure to be re-communicated through safety briefings and tool box talks
- Employer to ensure all grinders meet operational requirements, verified during site inspections
- Front line leaders must ensure that SHEWMS are being followed for all activities
- Incident Notification Management Procedure modified to address Improvement notice
- Face to Face Induction enhanced to provide clear and concise to contractors on their requirement to preserve incident sites which meet the Legislative Notifiable criteria

I have read and understood the contents of this Safety Alert

Employee Name	Signature	Date

Company Name	Contractor Name	Signature	Date