

Hand injury from portable grinder

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A subcontract worker received a 3cm laceration to the hand while using a portable grinder.

What happened?

The incident occurred during flowline fabrication work at a spool base.

The portable grinder was turned off and hanging on the grinder stand (vertical support), with a flapping disk installed.

The worker used his left hand to pick up the grinder to start preparation of the parent coating in the workstation.

As he grabbed the grinder, he inadvertently pressed the start trigger and the grinder started spinning.

The grinder then slipped hitting his left hand, which resulted in a 3cm laceration between thumb and forefinger.

He received first aid before being taken to hospital for further treatment – six stitches.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



What went wrong?

- The grinder used by the subcontractor had reduced safety features (i.e. a “deadman” switch only) when compared with company grinders at the same worksite (which were fitted with a “fast break deadman” switch).
- The wheel protection was not properly positioned, allowing the spinning disc to touch the workers’ hand. This was not aligned with company “Abrasive wheels training” requirements.
- Although the worker was wearing the appropriate anti-cut gloves, their specifications were of a lower protection than those used by company crew.

Lessons learned

- Ensure grinder wheel protection, and power tool guarding, is properly positioned before using the tool; during pre-work inspections; and during regular maintenance.
- Ensure subcontractors are clear on the requirements for PPE and hand tools – should be the same for all.
- Before all operations remember the “7T’s” – **take the time to think things through.**
- Exercise stop work authority as and when appropriate.

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