

NZ Safety Alert

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

October 2019

Injury from brush on grinder

A worker was using a handheld grinder with a wire wheel fitted to buff rust off steel before painting. The brush extended beyond the guard and the wheel got entangled in the sleeve of the workers overalls. He had trouble controlling the grinder and turning it off with only one usable hand.

The worker received serious abrasions to his arm which needed medical attention. The photo to the right was taken 2 weeks after the incident.



A. Safety guard for wire brushes.

You need to ensure that:

1. Operators are trained and assessed as competent to operate handheld equipment including grinders and brushes.
2. When using handheld tools, operators wear tight fitting clothes without loose or dangling items to avoid the risk of entanglement. Appropriate PPE is worn at all times.
3. Appropriate guards are fitted to all powered hand tools (see pic A. Safety guard for wire brushes).
4. You always use grinders in accordance with the Original Equipment Manufacturers specifications.

MinEx data on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the 24 months to June 2019 show 5% of all incidents (88 incidents) result from entanglement incidents, 71 of which are due to entanglement with plant.

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