

08/94 Misuse of an over centre load-binding in an engineering environment

Incident

An employee was required to draw together and hold the longitudinal seam of a rolled steel plate prior to welding it into a cylinder. Against normal practice the employee utilised an over centre load-binder (normally used for securing a load to the tray of a truck), to pull the joint together.

During this operation the locking mechanism of the over centre load-binder snapped open and the locking lever struck the employee in the eye. As a result the employee suffered a crushed cheekbone and the loss of one eye.

Factors

The over centre load-binder was used for a task not specifically recommended by the manufacturer and as a consequence may not have been fully closed just prior to the accident. Over centre load binders which are under load but not fully closed have the ability to snap open with considerable force. The unsecured nature of the unwelded cylinder is thought to have been a contributing factor.

Recommendations

Engineering workplaces should not permit the use of over centre load-binders for purposes other than those recommended by the manufacturer and even then employees should be advised not to unnecessarily remain in close proximity to the locking lever after a load has been secured.

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the WorkSafe internet site www.worksafe.wa.gov.au, or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email: safety@docep.wa.gov.au.

Date: April 1994

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