

Safety and health alert

24/01 Welder burnt

Incident

A welder received burns to his back when his clothing caught alight during a welding operation. Although he was badly burnt his injury could have been more serious.

The incident occurred on a chilly morning. Because of the chill factor the welder was wearing an industrial type jacket which was manufactured with a nylon lining. During the course of the welding process sparks or small particles of metal splatter ignited the lining of the jacket. The problem was further compounded when the welder's gauntlet (glove) became entangled in the sleeve of the jacket, preventing removal of the jacket. The welder ran into an adjoining welding bay where a fellow employee extinguished the flames.

Factors

- Employee not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, (a leather welder's jacket had been provided).
- The wearing of inappropriate work clothing (jacket with a synthetic lining which could burn and melt onto the skin).

Recommendations

Employees should:-

- Be made aware of the potential risk of serious injury when wearing inappropriate clothing (manufactured from synthetic material) where there is the possibility of the clothing coming into contact with heat or ignition sources.
- Be provided with, and wear, appropriate personal protective equipment for the hazards they are likely to encounter in the workplace.

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.

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