

Safety and health alert

23/96 Spindle moulder accident

Incident

An experienced 37-year-old joiner working in a Bayswater factory had a finger severed in October 1996 when rebating a piece of timber on a spindle moulder.

The joiner was feeding the workpiece into the cutter when the timber snatched and kicked. His left hand - which was close to the cutting area - caught the cutter, resulting in the amputation of his little finger.

Factors

1. The injured person did not use any jig to feed the timber.
2. The machine was not fitted with a false fence to reduce the risk of contact with the cutter.
3. The timber had a notch which caused it to snatch when manually fed.

Recommendations

1. Wherever applicable use a power feed spindle moulder.
2. When using a spindle moulder without power feed:
 - (a) ensure a false fence is fitted to reduce the risk of contact with the cutter whenever it is feasible to do so;
 - (b) construct a jig with secure handles to eliminate hand contact with the workpiece; and
 - (c) do not use timber with significant notches.
3. Employers must provide a safe system of work on wood working machines. AS1473.1991 Guarding and Safe Use of Woodworking Machinery provides some useful guidance.

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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