

Safety and health alert

41/00 Accidents on rural properties

Incident

The number of accidents occurring on rural properties involving machinery, including three recent fatal accidents, is of concern.

Farmers, employees and persons not being employees are being placed in hazardous situations by carrying out maintenance, repairs or alterations on machinery which is either moving, unguarded or is improperly jacked or packed.

Factors

- Lack of risk assessment.
- Removing manufacturers guards and not replacing them.
- Visitors and family members in the vicinity of, or using machinery.
- Working under machinery that is hydraulically lifted with no form of packing utilised.
- Working under suspended loads.
- Fatigue.
- Improvisation eg using fence wire in lieu of purpose fitted bolt.

Recommendations

- Undertake risk assessment for all tasks performed.
- If guarding is removed for repair or maintenance always ensure it is replaced.
- Visitors and family members should be kept away from moving machinery, work areas and not allowed to ride on tractors or in the back of utilities unless purpose built seating is provided.
- Never work under machinery or suspended loads unless a back up mechanism is in place in the event of downward creep, catastrophic collapse or load displacement.
- Take adequate rest breaks.
- Never improvise. Use only purpose built plant.

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.

A414533 Date: December 2000

