

Safety and health alert

10/2008 Hay press injury

Incident

An employee of a hay baling plant was operating the hay process line when he noticed a blockage in the system. The blockage was causing the bales to bank up on the process line and fall from the conveyor. With the assistance of another employee, he attempted to rectify the problem by holding back some bales to allow the blockage to clear itself. This was attempted without isolating, locking out and tagging out the plant.

While the employee was doing this, one of the bales fell, catching his sleeve and dragging his arm between an unguarded hydraulic ram and its housing. As the ram returned to its original position, it crushed his forearm before he was able to pull his arm away.

Factors to consider

- The process line had not been isolated, locked out or tagged out prior to accessing the dangerous parts, and was still in operation.
- The hydraulic ram involved was not adequately guarded to prevent contact with the dangerous parts.

Recommendations

1. A strict lock-out, tag-out and isolation procedure must be in place and followed, for whenever a person needs to access the moving parts of powered plant.
2. This lockout, tag-out and isolation procedure must be used during maintenance, cleaning, unblocking or inspection wherever these tasks involve accessing the moving parts.
3. All persons required to work with such machinery must be adequately trained and supervised to ensure that they adhere to the lockout, tag-out and isolation procedures at all times.
4. All moving, dangerous parts of plant must be guarded or fenced in such a way that persons are protected from the hazardous parts while the plant is in operation.

Further information

- Australian Standard 4024
- Machinery and Equipment Safety – An Introduction

Further information can be obtained from WorkSafe's 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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