

Safety Alert

Use of saw blades on angle grinders

The purpose of this Safety Alert is to highlight the dangers of fitting saw-type blades to hand-held angle grinders.

Background

A worker recently received a serious injury to his hand after using a milling blade fitted to a 4" grinder to tidy up an aluminium work piece. A saw-type blade was specifically highlighted by the manufacturer of the grinder as an attachment not suitable for the tool.

Businesses need to ensure after-market attachments fitted to plant meet design specifications authorised by the manufacturer. The use of saw blades (also known as screamer or milling blades) on angle grinders is particularly dangerous due to risk of kick-back.

The following factors and actions need to be considered to ensure hazards are identified and mitigated.



Contributing factors

The most common causes of injury to operators and nearby workers from angle grinders are lacerations from attachments that break and become projectiles, and lacerations from angle grinder kickbacks.

Action required

- Make sure all attachments are recommended by the manufacturer, and attachment selection is appropriate.
- Ensure the right tool is chosen for the job – a grinder is not always the safest option.
- Ensure operators have sufficient instruction, training and supervision to undertake the task safely.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Identification and risk management of potential hazards.

Further information

Legislation

- Section 21, *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act*
- Part 3.1, *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations*.
- Regulation 206, *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations*.

Guidance publications

- [Guidance Note – Safe use of angle grinders, WorkSafe Victoria¹](#)
- [Managing the Risk of Plant in Workplaces, Code of Practice²](#)

Contact details

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For more information on work health and safety, go to NT WorkSafe's website at www.worksafe.nt.gov.au

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¹ http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/14580/WS_ANGLE_GRINDER_GUIDANCE_NOTE_WEB.pdf

² <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/695/Managing-Risks-Plant-V2.pdf>