

SAFETY ALERT!



Compressed Air

This safety alert has been designed to inform and teach individuals about the risks associated with the replacing of fittings while working with compressed air. It also suggests possible control measures to help industry in managing the risks.

Background

A worker was killed while doing maintenance work on an air hose and its coupling devices. The hose whiplashed and fatally struck the worker's head.

Contributing factors

No safety precautions were taken to secure the air hose or to divert air pressure to another link on the air supply chain. When the individual loosened the fitting on the hose, it burst out of the coupling with its fitting still fixed, and thrashed around striking the individual a severe blow to the head.

Action Required

- No formal Written Safe Work Procedures are required for certain jobs or routine tasks. To address this incident, however, the operations personnel were informed of the destructive potential of 'unrestrained' compressed air hoses. They were instructed to implement training and were asked to include information during toolbox talks.
- Restraining devices should be installed where high-pressure compressed air hoses and couplings or fittings are regularly maintained to prevent air hoses from thrashing around.
- Regular inspection of all compressed air units, equipment and hoses should be carried out.
- A task Risk Assessment must be done whenever compressed air equipment needs major work.
- Thorough inspection of restraining devices, couplings, fittings and hoses must be done regularly, and corrective actions must be taken if equipment failure or faults are found.

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