

SAFETY ALERT!



USE OF POWER HAND TOOLS

The purpose of this safety alert is to highlight the danger and consequences when staff don't handle power tools correctly and are struck by these objects. This alert will suggest possible control measures to manage the risk.

Background

MAKROSAFE clients reported over **300** incidents in the previous year where employees were struck by an object. In total **1839** working days were lost as various employees were booked off due to injury. The total financial impact was calculated to be approximately **R720 888.00**.

One employee was using an electrical hand drill but didn't hold the drill firmly enough to control it. The drill fell on his hand and fractured his finger. The incident was reported as 'struck by an object'. The employee was booked off for **53** days, amounting to a total loss of **R20 776.00**.

Contributing factors

- The employee wasn't trained properly on operating the tool.
- The employee underestimated the strength and power of the tool he was handling.
- The employee didn't wear sufficient protective clothing.
- No, or too little, protective measures were taken to protect the employee.

Action Required

- Ensure that all hazards have been identified in the risk assessment and that adequate control measures are put in place to mitigate the risk of the hazard.
- Create awareness of the likelihood of being struck by an object in the workplace.
- Check the equipment before use to assure all items, parts and accessories are in safe condition.
- Make sure that people are properly trained on operating equipment or tools.
- Ensure that all personnel wear protective clothing.
- Disconnect power tools when not using them or before servicing or cleaning them.
- Keep all people not involved at a safe distance.
- Avoid accidental starting of power tools.
- Remove all damaged portable electric tools from use and tag them: 'Do not use'.

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