

SAFETY ALERT!



DRILL PRESS

The purpose of this document is to provide safety guidelines to be followed while working with the drill press.

Background

An employee was using a drill press to drill holes into steel plate. He needed to change out a drill bit. While he was loosening the chuck with a chuck key, his foot inadvertently made contact with the foot-operated pedal and started the machine. The chuck key caught the operator's glove as it rotated and pulled the operator's wrist and forearm around the chuck spindle. A co-worker in the workshop stopped the machine by depressing the drill's emergency stop button. The operator sustained an open forearm injury.

Contributing factors

The drill press was configured with a mushroom type emergency stop, as well as a foot operated stop/start switch (press pedal to start and release pedal to stop).

- While the operator was using the chuck key to loosen the drill bit, his foot made momentary contact with the foot switch and the machine started.
- As the operator's arm was pulled into the machine, he was unable to react in time to activate the mushroom type emergency stop button.
- He changed the drill bit without effectively electrically isolating the drill press.
- The drill press was not fitted with any electrical interlocking system, to prevent single point inadvertent operation.
- The drill press did not have any directions for operation or warning signs posted to it.

Action Required

The following recommendations are applicable to all workshop electrical machines:

- The machines' operation and emergency stopping should be reviewed to ensure safe operation under both routine and emergency conditions.
- The review should consider any workshop situations where an operator can be working alone, verifying the effectiveness of the emergency stop arrangement.

- FREE download of Safety Awareness Posters - www.makrosafe.co.za
- FREE download of this Safety Alert - www.makrosafe.co.za
- ACCREDITED Training Provider - Forklift; Overhead Crane; First Aid; OHS Legislation
- SAVE money - Let us manage all areas of your IOD.

