

MAKROSAFE Holdings (Pty) Ltd

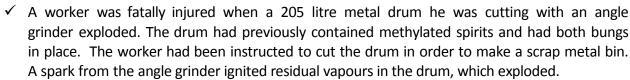
SAFETY ALERT!

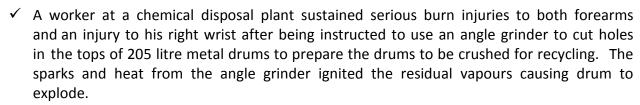
Angle grinder

The purpose of this safety alert is to highlight the dangers associated with using an angle grinder and suggest possible control measures to assist industry to manage the risk.

Background

There have been two recent incidents in workplaces where angle grinders have been used to cut open metal drums.





Contributing factors

- ✓ When operating an angle grinder it produces ignition sources such as heat and sparks.
- ✓ The drums had previously contained a highly flammable liquid and there was still chemical residue left in the drums.
- ✓ In one of the incidents there was no labelling on the drum. In the other incident the worker had not been informed about the hazards associated with the use of angle grinders and had limited understanding of English, therefore did not understand the risk or comprehend the safety instructions on the drum itself.

Action Required

- ✓ Angle grinders, or any other heat producing equipment, should not be used to cut metal drums that have contained flammable or combustible liquids or gases, or where there is any doubt about the previous contents of the drum.
- ✓ Empty drums should be recycled through specialist cleaning companies.
- ✓ All drums should be labelled and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) should be available for all hazardous substances at the workplace.
- ✓ Adequate training and instruction must be provided in a way that ensures that all workers, including those with limited understanding of English, understand the MSDS information and risks associated with the work to be performed.



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