

8/08/2022

Worker caught in operating conveyor

22 June 2022

A 30-year-old plant operator was carrying out unplanned maintenance on the conveyor belt of a material dump hopper at an asphalt production facility when he placed his arm into the operating conveyor resulting in the amputation of his arm.



Conveyor involved in incident

Safety information

Plant is a major cause of workplace death and severe injury in New South Wales workplaces. There are significant risks associated with using plant and the results of unsafe use and exposure to unguarded moving parts of machinery can be devastating.

Consider 'reasonably practicable' control measures to manage the risks associated with working with plant and machinery with moving parts and potential nip points such as conveyors.

Ensure:

- conveyors are guarded/fenced (if not a walk-under conveyor)
- the power sources are isolated, and danger tagged before working on a bogged or overloaded conveyor

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing and the findings are not yet confirmed. SafeWork NSW has commenced an investigation in response to the incident to determine its cause and circumstances. No conclusions should be drawn from the information in this publication about the cause of the incident or the culpability of any party.

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- all START/STOP, and emergency controls are marked and all persons working near a conveyor are aware of the controls' location
- the machine is never used if guards have been removed and/or the interlocks are not working or have been removed
- belts, pulleys, drum, trough or return idlers are not cleaned while a conveyor is moving
- repairs or maintenance are not carried out on a moving conveyor – if repairs, adjustments, or tracking are required on a moving conveyor without normal guarding, it is important that:
 - the work is carried out by an authorised competent person
 - an attendant is at the emergency stop station
 - the appropriate safe work procedure is in place
- safe operating procedures for setting-up, operating, cleaning, and maintaining the machine are followed
- adequate training of the conveyor operators. Each operator must understand the safe operating of the conveyor and safety precautions
- all persons wear appropriate clothing and avoid loose clothing near moving conveyors
- keep the area clean and tidy – good housekeeping eliminates hazards such as tripping, slipping, and falling.

Related guidance material

- [Guide to machine safety - SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Managing risks of plant in the workplace - code of practice](#)
- [Working safely with conveyors - SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Plant, machinery & equipment - SafeWork NSW](#)

Further information

- [Speak Up Save Lives App - SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Traumatic event management plan - SafeWork NSW](#)
- [Mental health at work - NSW Government](#)
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