



SAFETY ALERT

Angle Grinder Arm Slash

Name:

Date Read:

WHAT HAPPENED

On a Sunday afternoon a Farm Manager decided to do some maintenance on their feed-out wagon in preparation for the coming winter season. While cutting some steel with an angle grinder, the cutting disc came loose from the body of the grinder, escaping the guard on the grinder. It slashed through the Farm Manager's left arm, stopping at the bone. There was significant blood loss and required 7 hours of surgery. This is a serious injury and will need a lengthy recovery.

WHY DID IT HAPPEN

It wasn't clear what allowed the cutting disc to come loose, but it would have been either the locking tension becoming loose due to vibration, or it was due to the grinding disc being incorrectly replaced.

No pre-work check was done because the Farm Manager assumed it was a short job. While they did notice that the disc was new and assumed another team member must have recently replaced it, they didn't check the cutting disc was under the correct tension.

The guard was in place, in working order, and it deflected the disc away from body. The disc was able to cut the Farm Manager's arm because the arm was in front of the grinder, holding the steel rather than the grinder.

KEY LESSONS

- Even when the job seems simple or quick, run through a safety check to identify the risks, and work out how you'll manage them. Familiarity can make us too relaxed about risk.
- Check tools yourself before each use and don't assume they are in good condition because someone recently used them.
- Never position your arm, leg, or body in front of a rotating angle grinding disc.
- Check that the correct flange and locking nut is in place for the type of grinding or cutting disc being used. Too small discs will rotate at too high a speed. Check the guard and handles are secure and check power cords and batteries are in good condition.
- Do regular maintenance on all farm power tools e.g. chainsaws, brush cutters, grinding wheels in woolsheds, drills, saw benches, skill saw, and concrete cutters.
- Take a few minutes to make sure the whole team knows how to maintain power tools on farm and make sure everyone knows what to look for. Here's a quick video on changing discs and blades properly <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toFCMaJbzmA>.



Not actual - sample only

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