



SAFETY ALERT 07 / 2014

# SAFETY ALERT!

## Rotating equipment

The purpose of this safety alert is to alert employers and employees to the risk and consequences of equipment that rotates.

## Background

MAKROSAFE clients reported **16** incidents in 2013 in which employees were injured due to either getting struck by or caught by a machine or tool that was rotating. The employers, lost **79** working days' activity, which amounted to the total cost of **R 30,968.00** cost.

An employee was busy operating a milling machine. While trying to remove debris from the rotating equipment, his hand got caught. The employee was off work for **35** days at a cost to the company of **R13,720.00**.

## Contributing factors

- The machine operator wasn't properly trained.
- The layout of the workplace was inadequate to clean the machine effectively.
- The employee didn't want to shut down the machine because of fear of management.
- The supervisor had left his position to go and talk to a colleague.
- No warning was displayed on the machine to inform employees to switch off the machine before trying to clean it.
- The maintenance crew hadn't checked the machine before releasing it after a scheduled maintenance service.

## Action Required

- Display big signs on (rotating) equipment to warn people about the dangers the equipment poses.
- Provide sufficient training for anybody working with dangerous equipment.
- Avoid situations in which employees feel pushed to take shortcuts.
- Instruct maintenance and cleaning crews to first double-check whether all tools, (cleaning)materials, etc. have been removed before they release a machine for use again.
- Allow drivers to include extra time for breaks and possible delays.
- Cut off the main power supply to the machine before maintenance or cleaning work is performed.
- Ensure machine operators wear snugly fitting clothing.
- Never check or move items while the machine is still in operation.
- Instruct operators operating machines by remote control to first check if an area is clear before they switch on the machine.
- Install acoustic or visual warning systems near machines to warn employees once the machine is switched on by remote control.

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