



Safety Alert

INCIDENT TITLE: Electric winch hand injury

TIME AND DATE OF INCIDENT: 3 June 2019

INCIDENT DETAIL

While holding onto the hard eye at the end of the winch wire cable to apply tension to the cable while it was wound on, a contractor proceeded to tap the winch lift button to wind in the approximately 2–2.5m of cable. His hand got trapped in the winch.

He wound out the winch to release his hand, applied direct pressure to decrease blood flow and waited for a workmate to assist with his injury and drive him to the local medical centre.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

A portable electric winch was used to help move equipment and supplies up and down a shaft. There were limited options available to choose from and a Thac Mini Winch model SWL-170 was purchased for the work. This winch did not have a rope laying guide on the winch pulley.

BEST PRACTICE

- If possible, source a winch with a rope laying guide and with variable speed control.
- Ensure a thorough risk assessment is completed and understood before using unfamiliar equipment.

PHOTOGRAPHS



IMMEDIATE INTERIM ACTIONS

The Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment manual, Approved Code of Practice for Load-lifting Rigging – DECEMBER 2012, states in Section 6.1: “Ropes spooling onto winches should be guided by a piece of wood or similar, not by the hands. Hands should be kept clear of moving ropes, especially near blocks, and kept clear of sling eyes as the load is lifted.”

This Safety Alert is issued by the Corporate Safety & Health Team. For further information please contact:

Corporate Safety & Health Team



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