

Lost time injury whilst using Scala Penetrometer tool

What happened?

1. The IP (injured party) was using a Penetrometer Scala tool at the Kawerau drill well pads. On this occasion there were 2 types of Penetrometers available, one with and one without handles.
2. The penetrometer has a 5kg weight which free falls down a rod, connecting with the anvil at the bottom. The penetrometer with the handles is a safer tool (borrowed by the contractor on this occasion), but this slowed the job down due to the need to lever the weight out of the ground after each impact.
3. The IP changed tools after a day of using the preferred tool, in an order to speed up the job and to meet deadlines.
4. Pinching hands/fingers had been identified as a hazard in the Task Risk Analysis (TRA) prior to the work commencing. The listed controls included the requirement to use the penetrometer with handles and to keep hands well clear.
5. A short time after using the tool with no handles the IP's fingers became jammed in between the Anvil and the Base, resulting in 2 broken fingers and displaced nails.
6. The IP was not wearing Gloves at the time of the incident.

Drilling Well Pad - Kawerau Geo Mercury

What did we learn?

1. The contractor immediately purchased a penetrometer with handles to replace the one they currently had. (see pics)
2. The TRA was updated immediately after the job to reflect the safer penetrometer –with side handles - was to be used.
3. The TRA was updated to reflect that gloves must be worn when using this equipment, or any job where there is a risk of trapping fingers/hands.
4. Ensure adequate planning for jobs to enable work to be completed within a reasonable time frame. If unexpected conditions push timeframes out, be prepared to stop, reassess and shift deadlines, so that people aren't impacted by perceived timelines.



Scala Penetrometer with side handles



Scala penetrometer with no handles