

SAFETY ALERT



What Happened

A Worker from a Subcontractor was drilling a 20mm hole into a steel post to install sensors for a new security gate. The hole was drilled with a standard Milwaukee M10 battery drill with a 20mm hole saw bit. The worker was in a haunch position on one knee. When the hole saw punched through the steel it got stuck and the drill kicked back hitting the worker under the chin with the battery area

The worker bit his tongue in the process and went to his vehicle to have a drink of water. At this stage he lost consciousness and dropped to the ground. He was helped up and ensured everyone he was fine.

The Worker was taken to a medical centre for a checkup. The doctor dismissed the worker and suggested light duties for the rest of the day. The worker returned to site on light duties. The worker was checked on site for concussion. The worker was asked not to drive for the remainder of the day and to tell the site supervisor if he started getting blurred vision or headaches.

At this stage the site was still frozen, and the event was Notified to Worksafe NZ.

Lessons learned

The clutch on the drill was not set to a setting where the drill will disengage when it bites into the drilled object.

A side handle of the drill was not used.

Although this is a small battery-operated drill, there is still enough power in this drill to cause a serious injury.

What is happening post-event

Worksafe NZ returned the site to Meridian in about 2.5 hours.

The Main Contractor was tasked to have a toolbox meeting regarding the use of Power tools and rotating plant. The toolbox was attended by everyone on the Contractors worksite.

The worker was checked again the next day for any concussion symptoms. He seemed fine.

A Handle for small drills will be needed for all this type of drilling.

The clutch on the drill must be used to ensure there is no kickback.

The main contractor and 2 Subcontractors completed investigations.

Alternative drilling tools and techniques like a Mag Drill was discussed but it was found that the M10 drill with a side handle and clutch being set was fit for the job.

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Milwaukee M10 Drill



Hole drilled in post



Milwaukee M10 with Handle attached and Clutch visible



M10 Side Handle