

M O R G A N S A W M I L L

INCORPORATING SAWMILL DIRECT CASE & PALLET AND RIVERLAND TREATED PINE

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Incident summary #1

On the 15th of July 2015 at approximately 4.30pm, the injured worker was working as a stacker on the De-barker machine. This machine is used to strip the bark off small logs which can then be treated and used as vineyard posts. This machine is powered by the PTO shaft on the back of a Chamberlain tractor and has a combination of belts, live rollers and spinning blades.

Throughout the course of the day, bark and debris from the logs accumulates on the ground around the machine. This needs to be cleaned up at the end of each day. The injured worker and his co-worker/supervisor had ceased operation of the machine and had begun cleanup but left the machine running. The injured worker grabbed the roller framework at the back of the main machine to lean on it while he stood up from a bent over position. His hand became wedged between the framework and the roller and he sustained severe lacerations, five broken bones and a severed tendon in his left hand. The injuries required pins to be inserted into three of his fingers.

Before the incident, there was guarding in place in the designated operator work areas but not in the cleanup areas. Therefore, to clean while the machine was still running was inherently hazardous. Since the incident, additional guarding has been installed to protect employees from all accessible moving parts including conveyors, feed rollers and sprockets. This guarding cannot be removed without a tool. E-Stops have also been designed and installed at locations where cleanup or operations take place. The e-stops were specifically designed to operate a diesel engine powered machine as they are not commercially available.

In addition, all employees have received follow-up training so that they are fully aware that cleanup is only permissible when the machine is shut down and locked out.

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Incident summary #2

On the 9th of September 2015 at approx 3.45pm, the injured worker was assisting a co-worker who was using the single-operator Grey bench saw. Timber is fed through the saw by use of conveyor belts. The boards that need to be resized then return to the operator on a conveyor belt called the return belt. Sap from the sawn timber very occasionally builds up on the idle rollers of the return belt.

The co-worker who was operating the saw asked the injured worker to check the tracking of the return belt. The injured worker attempted to use a flat blade to chip the sap from the idle roller. The injured worker asked the co-worker to turn the belt on to make this process easier. After the injured worker successfully removed the sap from the idle roller, he moved on to the drive roller and attempted to scrape that while the belt was turning. At this point, his left forearm became caught in the drive roller of the return belt. The injured worker suffered de-gloving of the left forearm from the elbow to the wrist and three broken bones in his left arm.

There was guarding in place on the side of the saw where the operator stands but not on the side where the injured worker accessed the belt to undertake cleaning.

Since the incident, additional guarding has been installed so that the return belt is inaccessible during operation. A tool is needed to remove the guarding when maintenance or cleaning is required. All employees have received additional training so that they are fully aware that cleanup is only permissible when the machine is shut down and locked out.