



Work Safety Alert Struck by a Wire Rope of a Winch

1. **Date of Accident :** June 2020
2. **Place of Accident :** A reclamation site
3. **Summary :**

While a gang of workers was engaged in repairing a winch drum of a machine on a reclamation site, the wire rope of the winch drum was suddenly flipped which struck against two of the workers who were assisting in guiding the wire rope being winded back to the winch drum. One worker died and the other one sustained bone fracture injury as a result.

4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :

To ensure the safety of workers/ employees engaged in the inspection, maintenance and repair of a winch drum or similar device of a machine, the contractors/ employers should provide and maintain a safe system of work which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing a competent person to conduct task-specific risk assessments to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the nature of work, the work environment and the composition/ configuration/ operation of the winch drum or device involved, with particular attention paid to any unintended movement of the wire rope attached to the winch drum or device;
- formulating safe work methods and procedures for the work with due regard to the results of risk assessments, manufacturer's specifications/ instructions, and follow the requirements of safety legislation and relevant safety guidelines to minimise the risks exposed to the workers/ employees;
- where winding/ unwinding wire rope on/ off the winch drum or device



is required, among others,

- ensuring the wire rope is not subject to any load or unintended jerking force throughout the process;
- identifying the danger zone with a striking hazard in case of breakage or unintended flipping of the wire rope, and ensuring that all workmen involved are staying away from the danger zone so identified during work;
- keeping the motion of the winch drum or device under control to maintain desirable tension of the wire rope on the winch drum and applying the braking system to stop the motion immediately in case of emergency;
- ensuring the work are performed by trained and competent workmen, and under the direct supervision of an engineer/ a person who is competent by virtue of his knowledge and practical experience;
- ensuring that all workmen involved have access to the machine manufacturer's operation manual or relevant literature, possess adequate working knowledge of the operation of the winch drum or device, and are fully aware of the hazards involved in the process;
- ensuring effective communication among all workmen involved throughout the work;
- providing all workers/ employees concerned with the necessary safety information, instruction and training, and ensure that they are familiar with the safe work procedures and safety measures; and
- establishing and implementing an effective monitoring and control system to ensure all safety measures are strictly followed.



5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work¹](#)
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment¹](#)
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training¹](#)

DISCLAIMER

This Work Safety Alert (“the Alert”) is issued at the earliest possible opportunity after a serious accident with a view to drawing the attention of interested parties to the general safety precautionary measures necessary to protect people engaging in similar work activities. The material contained in the Alert constitutes general guidance only. It does not reduce, limit, or replace, any legal obligations upon any person to comply with any statutory duties under relevant legislation. Users such as Managers and Supervisors should make their own evaluation of the information contained in the Alert to determine if it can be applied to their own situations and practices. The Labour Department does NOT accept any responsibilities for any loss or damage resulting from the use of or failure to use of the information on the Alert.

Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.

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