

CONTRACTOR SAFETY ALERT **Nine inch angle grinders**

15 February 2016

Angle grinders are handheld tools commonly used in the construction industry.

Health and safety organisations across Australia have investigated a number of serious incidents caused by using cutting and grinding discs on handheld power tools and air tools. Common injuries are amputated fingers, severed tendons and deep cuts to the face, upper body or legs.

A worker died in Queensland earlier this year after the blade on a grinder he was using shattered and wounded him in the chest.

In August 2015, a worker on a DHA site suffered an electric shock from using a 9 inch grinder. This type of equipment is prohibited on many construction sites in Queensland and throughout Australia due to a historically large number of injuries from kickback and shattering of blades.

DHA recommends that contractors consider alternative options and seek to ban the use of 9 inch grinders from worksites.



Before using an angle grinder

- > Consider if it is the right tool for the job.
- > Is there a safer alternative method of cutting for the task?
- > Ensure all electrical equipment has been tested and tagged, and is in good working order.
- > Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Conduct a risk assessment

- > Consider the work environment, including the safety of other workers in the immediate area and any flammable sources which may be ignited by sparks from the grinder.
- > Wear appropriate hearing protection, safety glasses or a face shield when cutting or grinding.
- > Wear flame resistant clothing for hot work.



Further information on the safe use of angle grinders can be found on [WorkSafe Victoria](#) and [Work Cover Queensland](#) websites.

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