

Incident Date:	11 th December 2013	Location:	Perth
Safety Alert Date:	16 th December 2013	Country:	Australia
HSE Outcome:	Grease Injection into small finger, surgery, hospitalisation		
Equipment Involved:	Hand Activated Grease Gun		
Root Causes:	Operator was attempting to remove hand grease gun from grease nipple after pumping several times and finding it hard. In gripping hose and manoeuvring it the hose ruptured, injecting grease into little finger.		

INCIDENT

OPERATOR WAS USING A **HAND HELD GREASE GUN** TO LUBRICATE VARIOUS GREASE POINTS ON EARTH MOVING PLANT.

OPERATOR ONLY FELT A SHARP PRICK TO LITTLE FINGER AND ON INSPECTION NOTICED A SMALL HOLE. ON SQUEEZING FINGER APPROXIMATELY ONE TEASPOON OF GREASE WAS EJECTED. N.B. – GLOVES WERE NOT BEING USED AT THE TIME.

MEDICAL ATTENTION WAS SORT RESULTING IN A LENGTHY OPERATION AND REMOVAL OF A VEIN IN THE FOREARM. THIS WAS REPLACED WITH AN ARTIFICIAL VEIN.

AT THIS TIME THE OPERATION APPEARS SUCCESSFUL HOWEVER CONSTANT MEDICAL MONITORING AND SURGERY CARE IS PARAMOUNT TO A SUCCESSFUL REHABILITATION.

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KEY SAFETY LEARNING'S

- INSPECT EQUIPMENT PRIOR TO USE TO ENSURE IT IS IN SOUND WORKING ORDER WITH NO CUTS, DAMAGE.
- CHECK AND TIGHTEN ALL FITTINGS.
- WEAR SUITABLE PROTECTIVE GLOVES WHEN USING ANY EQUIPMENT WITH STORED ENERGY POTENTIAL.
- EVEN RELATIVELY LOW PRESSURE EQUIPMENT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO INFLICT HYDRAULIC INJECTION INJURY.
- GREASE GUN HOSE WAS NOT A STRENGTHENED HYDRAULIC PRESSURE (WOVEN/MESH) TYPE BUT OF RUBBERISED COMPOUND ONLY.

DISTRIBUTION

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Liebherr would like to acknowledge and thank Jake Burley for sharing his story in the interests of safety awareness.

Liebherr wishes Jake a full and speedy recovery.

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Liebherr-Australia Pty Ltd encourages the responsible distribution of this Safety Alert in the interests of best practice Occupational Health and Safety management.

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Liebherr Australia Pty Ltd

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