



Operational Alerts inform Signal Mutual Members of serious incidents within the Mutual that resulted in permanent disability, death, or a significant near miss. If you have similar operations, please share this Operational Alert and have a safety discussion with operation managers, supervisors, equipment operators, and all affected employees. It is imperative that management review their operational controls at all levels to mitigate similar hazardous conditions and/or acts.

INCIDENT: ABRASIVE BLASTING INJURY

SUMMARY OF RECENT INCIDENT

While sandblasting, a blaster began experiencing problems with the deadman switch. After discussion, the blast pot-tender left the area to retrieve a new switch from the shop. In the interim, the blaster attempted to repair the switch. In the process, he unintentionally triggered the switch causing material to discharge while still under pressure.

The blast stream hit the worker in the forearm causing abrasion injuries to the skin and tissue. The worker was transported to the hospital where surgery was performed to remove debris from the subcutaneous tissue.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure all blasters are equipped with appropriate blasting equipment, gloves, coveralls, hoods, and PPE.
- Never leave a charged line unsecured or unattended.
- The blast pot-tender must not leave the pot without first securing operations or being properly relieved by another authorized pot-tender.
- Do not modify any part of the blast nozzle, alter dead-man switches, secure triggers in place or similar actions.
- Only qualified and authorized personnel are allowed to repair components.
- Ensure blast hose connections are properly pinned from compressor to nozzle.
- Do not attempt repairs on equipment or release the hose unless the power is secure, and all pressure has been relieved.
- When necessary, send a signal to the blast pot-tender to notify that there is a problem.



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