

SAFETY ALERT



AUSTRALIAN STEEL INSTITUTE
SAFETY GROUP

"Sharing incident learnings amongst ASI member companies"

"A vision of a safer steel industry"

Number:	SA0039
Subject:	Sanding Disc – Laceration Hazard
Date:	December 2010

Incident:

An operator sustained a minor laceration whilst using an angle grinder to perform sanding operations on a steel plate. The operator had been using the grinder without a guard in place as the normal grinder guard did not allow flat placement of the sanding disc. The sanding disc also protruded approximately 5mm past the rubber backing disk creating a cutting hazard.

After kneeling down sanding the plate, the operator stood up to change positions, let go of the on/off switch and the angle grinder continued to spin slowing down. The protruding sanding disc brushed against his leg, cutting through his trousers and inflicting a small graze to his leg requiring first aid.

Key Lessons:

- No protective guard was in place.
- Operator stood up whilst sanding disc was still spinning.
- Angle grinders are more powerful and the disc spins faster than disc sanders (i.e. 2500W @ 8500rpm vs. 1600w @ 4000rpm). Thus the disc spins longer after the on / off switch is released and may not be suitable to the speed rating of the backing and sanding disc.
- Rubber backing pads are generally smaller than the sanding disc, creating a dangerous spinning cutting edge.



Angle grinder with guard removed and sanding disc attached.



Sander – Note the different hand position

Recommendations:

- Guards must be in place when using angle grinders.
- Operators to be advised to ensure the disc stops spinning before changing positions.
- Operators to be advised to use disc sanders for sanding and not to improvise with grinders.
- Operators to be made aware of protruding sanding disc danger.

For further information please contact **Phil Casey** – ASI National Safety Group Coordinator:
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