

Media Release Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Issue Hazard Alert: Traumatic Amputation of Digits

Iqaluit, NU (April 15, 2016) – Today, the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) release a Hazard Alert, advising Northerners to exercise caution and use safe work practices to prevent amputation of digits(s) in doorways.

A worker suffered traumatic amputation of the tips of the fourth and fifth digits of the right hand while operating an electrically-driven garage door. The open button was pressed with their left hand, and they failed to remove their right hand out of the way of the track and rollers.

Recommendations on how to prevent recurrence:

- Ensure that all employees are instructed in the use of automated garage door use.
- Position the operational controls at a position where the operator cannot come into contact with moving parts.
- Ensure controls have a fail-safe mechanism (i.e. a dead man's switch).
- Install audible/visible alarms to alert workers when the garage door is opening and closing.
- Ensure (if installed) the safety devices installed on the garage door are functioning and operational.

The WSCC cautions Northerners to always pay attention to their surroundings, conduct hazard assessments to ensure their work spaces are free of hazards, and implement controls to prevent incidents.

Workplace accidents and injuries are preventable. Employers and workers share the responsibility of ensuring their workplace remains a safe environment for all. For more information, refer to the attached *Hazard Alert*.

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Hazard Alert



Hazard Summary

A worker was opening an electrically-driven garage door. The worker pressed the open button with their left hand, and failed to move their right hand from the path of the track and rollers. The worker suffered traumatic amputation of the tips of the fourth and fifth digits of the right hand. The garage door had no auto-reverse function, guards, or safety system.

Hazard Location

Warehouse area of a supply company.



What the Legislation States

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations NU: 145. (1) An employer shall provide an effective safeguard if a worker could come into contact with (a) a

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dangerous moving part of a machine; (b) a pinch point, cutting edge or point of a machine at which material is cut, shaped, bored or formed;

146. (1) If the conditions described in subsection (2) apply, an employer shall install (a) an audible alarm system that provides a warning of sufficient volume and for a sufficient period before start-up of the machine to give workers timely notice of the imminent start up.

Recommendations to Prevent Recurrence

- Ensure that all employees are instructed in the use of automated garage door use.
- Position the operational controls at a position where the operator cannot come into contact with moving parts.
- Ensure controls have a fail-safe mechanism (i.e. a dead man's switch).
- Install audible/visible alarms to alert workers when the garage door is opening and closing.
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