

SAFETY BULLETIN

84 - Hand Safety

How important are your hands?

Your hand is one of the most complex parts of your body, comprised of tendons, bones, tissues and nerves that together allow you to perform a wide variety of tasks.

Without your hands, it would be extremely difficult to complete simple tasks, such as opening doors, brushing your teeth, or even tying your shoe laces. A hand injury can be debilitating and significantly affect your daily functioning.

Background

Hand injuries are among the most common work-related injuries that affect Australian and New Zealand workplaces.

Across Programmed, we have recently had a spate of incidents, resulting in our people suffering serious hand injuries. The injuries have specifically affected the fingers and have occurred across multiple industries, including construction, maintenance and manufacturing. Whilst the incidents have varied in nature, they have primarily been as a result of the fingers becoming crushed between heavy objects, caught between moving parts, or coming into contact with sharp items.

How can we prevent hand injuries?

- Review the work environment and task to understand what hazards can injure your hands and implement protective measures.
- Plan the task and choose the best tool and technique for the job.
- Discuss any identified hazards amongst the work crew so everybody understands the risks.
- Utilise guarding or machinery safeguards that prevent hands from accessing dangerous parts.
- Use equipment that removes the need to place hands in a position that could be impacted.
- Identify moving equipment, pinch points or rotating parts and avoid placing hands in the line of fire.
- Consider the impact from automated equipment and the fact that this may start up unannounced.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or jewellery that can become caught in moving machinery.
- Wear the right PPE – there are different gloves for different tasks.
- Never remove machine safeguards or operate machinery when safeguards are not in place.



Report all incidents and near misses