

# SAFETY ALERT

## 360 – Injuries from Packaging Strapping

### Background

In recent weeks there has been an increase in injuries involving **packaging strapping**.



Strapping used to secure loads can be made from **plastic or steel** and is often under high tension. If handled incorrectly, it can release suddenly and **recoil** (“**spring back**”), striking workers.

#### Recent injuries have included:

- **Lacerations to forearms and hands** from sharp strap edges
- **Straps striking workers in the face and eyes** when tension is released



Steel strapping in particular can create **very sharp edges** when cut, increasing the risk of serious lacerations during removal or disposal.

### Safety Issues

- **Eye injuries** from strapping whipping back when cut or tension is released.
- **Lacerations** from sharp plastic or steel strap edges.
- **Sudden spring-back** from tensioned strapping, particularly steel.
- **Airborne strap fragments** during cutting or breakage.
- **Incorrect cutting techniques** increasing the risk of recoil.

### RECOMMENDED WAYS TO CONTROL RISK

#### Equipment and Tools

- Use approved strap cutters designed to reduce recoil.
- Apply tensioning and sealing tools correctly to prevent uncontrolled release.
- Use strapping dispensers to control coils and prevent unravelling.
- Ensure guards are fitted and used on tensioning equipment where applicable.
- Inspect strapping tools regularly for damage or wear and repair or replace as required.

#### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Wear safety glasses or a face shield when cutting or tensioning strapping.
- Wear cut-resistant gloves when handling or disposing of strapping.
- Safety footwear and long sleeves are recommended when working around strapped loads.

#### Safe Work Practices

- Cut strapping away from the body, keeping the face and torso out of the recoil line.
- Stand to the side of the strap, not directly in front.
- Control both ends of the strap when cutting to prevent whipping.
- Do not cut strapping under load tension until the load is stable.
- Keep hands clear of sharp edges and dispose of cut straps immediately into bins.

For more information contact [safety@programmed.com.au](mailto:safety@programmed.com.au)

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**Report all incidents and near misses**

Please display on Safety Noticeboards and raise this matter at the next Toolbox Talk or Safety Meeting.