Safety & Care Grinder Safety

Grinders, or tools that use abrasive/grinding wheels and discs, are commonly found on many worksites and in our homes. To use them safely, it is important to note that rotating grinding wheels and cutting discs can break, causing the potential for injury. To minimize the risk of serious injury, follow these safe work practices:

- Only use a grinder after you receive proper training and authorization from your supervisor.
- Only use a grinder that has the manufacturer's guard safely in place.
- Adjust tool rests on bench or pedestalmounted grinding wheels to within 3 mm (1/8 inch) of the wheels. Never adjust rests while the wheels are moving. Work rest height should be on the horizontal centre line of the machine spindle.



- Always wear appropriate eye, face, and hand protection when using a grinder. Wear hearing protection if necessary.
- Choose the correct grinder for the job.
- Verify that the wheel or disc is suitable for the material, the correct size for the grinder (including centre hole size), and suitable for use at the maximum r.p.m. of the grinder.
- Always follow the safe operating procedures, including the correct body position to reduce exposure to flying sparks or debris and shielding in case of wheel failure or kickback.
- Inspect grinder abrasives such as cups, discs, and wheels for damage prior to each use and upon delivery.
- Operate grinders and other air-powered tools within the manufacturer's stated range of operating speed and pressures.
- Use the manufacturer's handle on a handheld grinder unless operating procedures allow its safe removal.

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What NOT to do when using grinders:

- Do not modify, alter, or remove the manufacturer's guard.
- Do not use a wheel that has been dropped.
- Do not use a wheel or disc that does not fit properly to the spindle or guards.
- Do not use excessive force to tighten the nut of the wheel. The force can crack the wheel.
- Do not grind wood, plastics, and non-iron metals with ordinary wheels.
- Do not leave grinding wheels or discs lying on workbenches or other surfaces unprotected from impact damage.
- Do not leave grinding wheels standing in liquids. The liquid can cause balance problems.
- Do not grind on the side of a regular wheel.
- Do not use cutting discs for grinding, or grinding discs for cutting.

If a grinder appears to be defective or unsafe, tag it out of service and immediately report it to a supervisor. The bursting of a grinding wheel or disc is a dangerous occurrence, and you or your supervisor must report it to the WSCC Chief Safety Officer, even if no one suffered an injury.

For more information, visit our website to review the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*.

Sources:





wscc.nt.ca 1.800.661.0792

http://www2.worksafebc.com/i/posters/2008/ha2008-07_grinder.htm; http://work.alberta.ca/documents/WHS-PUB_al024.pdf; http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/abrasive_wheels/safeuse2.html