



Finger Laceration

A grounds maintenance crew were clearing vegetation away from a chain link fence. Two of the crew were operating petrol-powered hedge trimmers and one crew member was tasked with raking away the cut debris.

The injured person was kneeling while sweeping away cut foliage with his hand. Unbeknown he was sweeping the cut foliage over the trimmer blades.

While standing up he gripped the trigger handle of the hedge trimmer and placed his other hand onto the hedge trimmer blades.

His action of pushing himself up caused him to squeeze his grip on the trigger handle and engage the blades thereby seriously cutting two fingers of the hand resting on the trimmer blades.

Note that the injured person was not wearing his protective gloves and he was not following the manufacturers safety instructions.



Immediate actions

Work was halted and a shirt found (more effective than their First Aid Kit) and wrapped around the injured hand to stem the bleeding. One of the crew members escorted the injured person to the local medical centre.

The other crew member packed up the work equipment to make the site safe and then contacted his manager to report the incident.

Follow-up Actions

1. Re-training for all staff on the use of tools and equipment and importance of following work processes.
2. Mandatory use of protective gloves discussed and entered into the standard operating procedure.

For more information, please contact:

Name	Chris Humble
Position	Contract Manager
Mobile	027 436 7360
Email	Chris.humble@wsp.com
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