

## LEARNING ALERT 26-11 HAXBY WALBUTTS CUT-OFF SAW INJURY

*The following Safety Alert contains content from an external source which is relevant to MWH Treatment Operations.*

### What Happened?

During the installation of rebar pull-out boxes onto a recently fixed re-bar mesh cage, an operative suffered a cut injury to their leg. The IP was using a petrol cut-off saw to cut some of the vertical steel bars, and when moving in to make the first cut to the rebar, his leg caught on a starter bar and he stumbled. This loss of control caused the spinning abrasive wheel to come into contact with his left leg just above the knee. The IP sustained a cut requiring four stitches and returned to work the next day. However, the outcome could have been much worse.

### Photos:



### Root Cause(s) and Contributing Factor(s):

- **Design** – The different diameter of rebar with equal spacing made installation difficult prompting the cutting.
- **Planning** – The working area had obstructions making the cut position awkward to reach.
- **RAMS** – The RAMS did not identify a safe cutting location, secondary controls or the safest tool for the task.
- **Training** - The operative's cut-off saw training had not fully covered the correct use of the cut-off saw in different cut positions and orientations.
- **Incorrect use** – The saw was not being used correctly, the blade should have been facing away from the user.

## What do we all need to do?

### Design Teams:

- Desing teams must consider buildability, such as specifying similar bar diameters or pre-cut materials at the design stage.

### Site Teams:

- When carrying out cutting tasks, ensure the work area is free from obstructions, with space to enable a comfortable, stable and secure cutting position.
- Consider high energy mechanical hazards when planning cutting operations and preparing RAMS – do we have a direct control or at least two secondary controls?
- Ensure operatives are properly trained on different cutting techniques / positions so the safest method can be chosen for the week.

## The following offers guidance on how to control high energy power tools:

### Direct Controls

- Eliminate the hazard at the design / planning stage
- Use an alternative tool e.g. bolt crops, hand saw, hydraulic shears
- Order materials pre-cut, pre-drilled, bespoke for the task
- Use tools with remote control operation

### Secondary controls | Category 1: Barrier / distance

#### Restricts access to high energy hazard areas

- Ensure that all required guards are in place
- Use two hands on the tool to distance your hands from the danger zone
- Have the correct stance / posture / grip to ensure a controlled distance from moving parts
- Wear cut proof clothing / PPE

### Secondary controls | Category 2: Monitoring

#### Someone's job to stop people approaching when not safe

- Appoint a suitable monitor / supervisor to oversee the task. They can ensure that all safety measures are being followed. E.g. a workbench is being used.

### Secondary controls | Category 3: Reminders

#### To maintain safe distance between yourself and high energy

- Use tags or stickers on the tool to remind of safe operation methods.
- Use signage e.g. 'Don't use Stihl saws above shoulder height' as a reminder of the hazard and controls.

