SAFETY ALERT

MINERAL RESOURCES NEW SOUTH WALES

QUARRY EMPLOYEE INJURED AFTER

FAILURE TO ISOLATE PUGMILL

INCIDENT

A quarry employee received a fractured jaw and chin when he used a crowbar to clear a blockage in an operating pugmill.

CIRCUMSTANCES

The employee attempted to unblock a water inlet pipe of a pugmill while it was operating. He stood on top of the steel pugmill doors, which guarded the rotating augers, and chipped away at the hard material in the gap between the inlet pipe and the pugmill cover. When the bar was forced through the gap, it made contact with the rotating augers below. The bar flew back and struck the employee on both sides of his face fracturing his jaw and chin.

INVESTIGATION

1. The pugmill was working at full capacity to supply a large job.
2. The employee had been taking samples of the pugmill product and was concerned about the water content as two out of the three inlet pipes were blocked.
3. The employee was aware of and had been trained in the company's isolation and lockout procedures and was in possession of his own isolation padlocks.
4. The pugmill was adequately guarded.
5. The blow to the head was partially cushioned by the employee's hard hat.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

All mine sites:
1. Follow the Mines Inspection Act General Rule 2000. Clause 73 (1). This requires that repairs or adjustments not be carried out to power driven equipment or machinery unless the power supply has been adequately isolated.
2. Develop isolation procedures to control exposure to hazardous energies and provide all employees with information and training
3. Prepare safe work procedures for all tasks where risk assessments identify the potential for serious injury from working on or adjusting equipment or machinery
4. Direct supervisors to regularly observe compliance with isolation procedures.
5. Apply risk assessment to equipment and machinery design to determine and eliminate blockages and the need to clear them.

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