

# SAFETY ALERT #025

**Dated: Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**Title: Grinder Fatality**



Angle grinder and disintegrated disk

## WHAT HAPPENED?

A welder was carrying out maintenance on an excavator bucket. He was using an angle grinder to prepare surfaces for welding when the disk disintegrated. The hand-held angle grinder was fitted with a 230 mm diameter cutting-off wheel and when it disintegrated, fragments penetrated the victim's chest and abdomen. He was rushed to hospital by rescue helicopter but died the same day.

## WHAT CAUSED IT?

Initial inspections show that the grinding machine and cutting disk were not compatible. In addition, the grinder was not fitted with a guard.

## CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

Grinding machines and abrasive wheels should always be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. In particular:

- Always ensure the maximum speed (the no load rpm) marked on the abrasive wheel is greater than the rated speed of the grinder.
- Do not use grinding wheels that are larger than the maximum recommended size, or worn down wheels from other grinders.
- Never use grinding wheel power tools without the wheel guard attached to the tool and positioned for maximum safety.
- Store and handle abrasive wheels with care and inspect them for chips or cracks before installing. Do not use any wheel that may be damaged.
- Cutting disks should only be used for cutting only and not for grinding purposes.
- Training on 'safe use of grinding machines' to be provided to all personnel using this equipment

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

- Driven Machinery Regulation 8 – Grinding Machines