Toolbox Talk

Correct PPE to be worn when using Cutting/Grinding Tools

In recent weeks we have received three escalations from third parties where our operatives have been seen not wearing the correct PPE when using cutting or grinding tools. This is unacceptable and must not be allowed to continue.

Whilst the wearing of certain PPE on all our sites is mandatory, legally it is seen as the last line of defence and other more preferable measures should be taken in addition to the wearing of PPE, particularly when using cutting and grinding tools. We also have a duty to physically protect the public who may be affected by our works. Such measures would therefore include;

**Key Point**

- Dust suppressants such as water systems or dust collection bags fitted to the equipment
- Use of alternative equipment that do not produce airborne dust e.g. guillotine for block paving.

**Use of PPE**
Key Points

1. Correct PPE to be worn when using Cutting/Grinding Tools
   - Helmet / Gloves / Long Sleeve Hi-Vis Jacket (& undershirt) / Long trousers / Safety Footwear  (ALL MANDATORY)
   - Protective Glasses / Ear Protection / Face Mask or Respiratory Protection (minimum FFP3)  (ALL CORRECTLY SPECIFIED FOR TASK IN HAND)

2. Managers/Supervisors should ensure all PPE is
   - Suitable for the task
   - Available
   - In good condition
   - Worn by operatives

3. Operatives MUST
   - Wear Mandatory PPE at all times
   - Wear Task Specific PPE as instructed
   - Ensure all PPE is in good condition (regular check and replace where necessary)

4. All Managers and Supervisors to ensure all operatives are briefed and signed attendance sheets returned

Some consequences of not wearing appropriate PPE

**Dust Inhalation** – causing Industrial Silicosis or Pneumoconiosis (both cause hardening of the lungs) resulting in permanent breathing difficulty

**Flying debris** – particular threat to eyes causing discomfort, visual impairment (temporary or permanent), inability to work and therefore earn, family and social consequences

**Cuts and abrasions** – to hands, head, feet, legs and torso (in fact all over the body) resulting in possible permanent disfigurement.

**Noise Exposure** – causing noise induced hearing loss (temporary or permanent), loss of concentration, inability to hear desired sounds e.g. reversing plant, fire alarms, conversations etc.