

SUBJECT: Abrasive Operations Using Cutoff Wheels and Masonry Saws

Purpose: This instruction provides guidelines for violations related to guards for cutoff wheels and masonry saws.

Scope: This instruction applies MNOSHA-wide.

Reference:

1. 29 CFR 1910.215, Abrasive Wheel machinery
2. 29 CFR 1926.303, Abrasive Wheels and Tools
3. 29 CFR 1926.702(i), Requirements for Equipment and Tools
4. ANSI B7.1-1970 (R 2000). Safety Code for the Use, Care and Protection of Abrasive Wheels

Cancellation: This instruction supersedes MNOSHA Instruction STD1-12.26, Abrasive Operations Using Cutoff Wheels and Masonry Saws, dated, May 17, 2011.

Background: Cutoff machines utilizing abrasive wheels are used in general industry and construction. Abrasive wheels are covered under 29 CFR 1910.215(b)(5) and 1926.303(d). The source standard, ANSI B7.1-1970, "Safety Code for the Use, Care and Protection of Abrasive Wheels", allows a maximum angular exposure of 150-degrees on such equipment. Later updates to ANSI B7.1 in 1978 and 1988 and 2000 permit a maximum angular exposure of 180 degrees.

Masonry saws used in construction to cut brick, tile and concrete block utilize either an abrasive wheel or a tungsten carbide or diamond blade (water cooled). Such equipment is covered under 1926.702(i), which allows an angular exposure of 180-degrees ("a semicircular enclosure over the blade").

Conflicts exist on the maximum allowable angular exposure, but OSHA has no information to support a choice between 150° and 180° maximum angular exposure, or to substantiate any direct and immediate relationship of such a choice to safety and health.

ACTION:

- A. Cite 1910.215(b)(5) or 1926.303(d) when the guard for an abrasive cutoff wheel (not used for masonry) does not cover at least half the wheel (180 degrees).
- B. Cite 1926.702(i) when the guard for a masonry saw used in construction to cut tile, brick, concrete block, but not steel, does not cover at least half the wheel (semicircular).

James Krueger, Director MNOSHA Compliance
For the MNOSHA Management Team

Distribution: OSHA Compliance and WSC Director

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