

NZ Safety Alert

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe.

25 August 2023

Uncontrolled movement of drill mast

A drill rig had been in the workshop for servicing and a mast swing cylinder change out. Both tasks had been completed and the machine was being prepared for release from the workshop.

As a fitter was exiting the workshop, he was not aware that the cylinder had not been bled of air. While conducting function testing, he raised the mast and it slewed to the side and downward to the ground in a rapid and uncontrolled manner.

The area was not barricaded, and workers could have accessed the area during the time the mast moved.



[MinEx data](#) on incidents with the potential to cause harm over the past 5 years show 16% of incidents (963 incidents) result from fall, of which 377 involved fall of equipment.

You need to ensure that:

1. Procedures are in place to effectively barricade machinery that is being worked on or tested to exclude the potential for people to be in the line of fire.
2. You have a process to verify that hydraulic cylinders have been bled of air prior to being worked on or commissioned.
3. Regular workplace inspections are conducted to ensure safe work procedures are in place and are effective.

Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.