TOOL BOX TALK
LINE OF FIRE INJURIES

Hays has seen an increase in injuries sustained by workers that have unintentionally put their body or parts of their body in the Line of Fire of a moving object or object under tension. Investigations conducted by the Health and Safety Team identify a number of recurrent themes. These include:

- Rushing to get a job done
- Safety equipment such as guarding removed from hand held tools
- Workers not considering the potential hazards associated with a task

There is sometimes a perception that a job just has to get done. In this situation we rush, cut corners or ignore an obvious risk. We are often blind to risks to our health and safety that we would ordinarily see if we took our time. Alternatively, we simply do not consider the risk to our Health and Safety because we assume something is true when it is not. For example, assuming a pipe is not under pressure, or an electrical circuit is not live.

Avoiding Line of Fire Injuries

Look for hazards before you commence a task. At its most basic level, the line of fire is the path a moving object will travel. If you are in this path you are at risk of sustaining an injury. Avoid the risk of being in the line of fire by asking a number of questions before you commence a task. These include:

- What objects are moving or under tension?
- If an object under tension is released, am I likely to be in the line of movement?
- What is happening around me that may cause a sudden movement and put me in the line of fire?

Eliminate the hazard where possible. Once a line of fire hazard is identified, take steps to eliminate the risk of harm. The best-case scenario is to remove the hazard completely. For example, removing the source of tensile or pneumatic pressure from an object. If an object is no longer under pressure, it cannot move with the amount of force required to cause an injury.

Use best practices for minimizing hazards. If an object under pressure cannot be eliminated, it is necessary to ensure that an object is guarded to provide a physical barrier should an object under pressure be released. It is then necessary to ensure a barrier can sustain the force released without failing. This is also the case for powered and non-powered hand held tools. Ensure that any movement is away from the body rather than towards you.

Reporting a Line of Fire Risk

Do not think because you may be new on site that you should not report a hazard. No job is so important that you should risk your health and it is far more effective to address a hazard before an injury occurs.

The two most common ways to report a hazard are to contact the Health and Safety team directly on 1800 786 057 or by contacting the consultant who placed you on site.