

◀ HEALTH & SAFETY ALERT ▶



Finger Amputated on Rotating Drill Bit

During an operation to drill an 18mm hole to a depth of 850mm into an existing pile using a Hilti TE80 electric combi-hammer drill an operator lost his footing and hand hold and in attempt to steady himself reached out for the exposed and still rotating drill bit. The injuries sustained before the drill was brought to a stop included an amputation down to first knuckle of the top middle finger with fractures to two further fingers on the individual's gloved hand. At the time of the incident, the injured person was assisting his drill-operating colleague by way of holding the side handle of the tool to applying additional force.



Relevant Considerations

The following is a non-exhaustive list of considerations:

- Avoid at all costs any bodily contact the drill bit whilst in rotation mode
- This type of drill is designed for ONE person usage only with both hands on the tool – operators must seek supervisory advice if they consider that the tool is not doing its' required job
- Operator competence must be determined by those supervising
- Tool operating instructions must be readily available and those deemed competent and familiar with the content – especially the 'Use' and 'Safety Instructions' sections
- Ensure any work platform provided is free from trip/slip hazards and does not cause overreaching of the operator
- Use progressively longer drill bit lengths to generate the required hole depth and NEVER consider assisting the location of any drill bit by hand
- Make consideration for both the vibratory effect of these tools (user-time limitations) and the fact that dust generated from drilling concrete should not be inhaled
- Suitable control systems for operator contact during use and prevention of *other* persons entering the drilling zone should considered and agreed prior to the start of works
- Gloves worn should be of an appropriate type and be of the correct size for the operator