Hand-Arm Vibration

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TOPIC: Hand-Arm Vibration

Hand-arm vibration is caused by the use of vibrating hand-held tools. The vibration involved with these tools (a rapid back and forth type of motion) is transmitted from the tool to the hands and arms of the person holding the tool.

Health Hazards

- Vibration Syndrome—symptoms include muscle weakness, muscle fatigue, pain in the arms and shoulders, and Vibration-Induced White Finger (known as "Dead Finger" or "Dead Hand").
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome—sometimes caused by the use of smaller hand-held vibrating tools. Symptoms include tingling in the fingers, numbness and pain in the wrist and fingers.

Safety Tips

- When possible, find ways to minimize the use of vibrating tools.
- Substitute manual tools for a vibrating tools when practical.
- Replace high-vibration tools with low vibration tools designed to absorb vibration before it reaches the handgrip.
- Introduce work breaks to avoid constant, continued vibration exposure (a worker using a vibrating tool continuously should take a 10-minute break after each hour of tool use).
- Maintain all tools to ensure their proper operation.

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