

No images? [Click here](#)



Department of Local Government,
Industry Regulation and Safety



Monthly incident insights

WorkSafe Mines Safety

May 2026 edition

Issued 23 June 2026

184 notifiable
incidents in
May



27

notifiable
incidents
compared to
April

148 reportable
incidents in
May



=

reportable
incidents
compared to
April

3

Three summarised incidents in this edition

Note: Correct as of 15 June 2026.

Report a notifiable incident to

1800 678 198

Report all incidents online
[SRS – Safety Regulation System](#)

Reportable incidents

Falling pipe rebounds and strikes worker in drop zone

A worker sustained rib and shoulder blade fractures after a 1.8 m section of 150 nominal bore pipe rebounded within a designated drop zone during removal from an elevated work platform. Workers cut the pipe free and dropped it from height during the task.

The pipe landed within a 14 m² drop zone but deflected on impact and rolled across the area. Despite the presence of spotters, the moving pipe struck a trades assistant who was sitting on a kerb inside the exclusion zone.

The incident shows how dropped objects can travel unpredictably after impact and expose workers to line-of-fire hazards, even where controls are in place.

It demonstrates how quickly routine lifting tasks can escalate when exclusion zones do not account for secondary movement on hard surfaces.

Takeaways

- **Design exclusion zones:** Allow for bounce, deflection and rolling, particularly when handling long or heavy pipe sections.
- **Enforce exclusion:** Keep all personnel out of drop zones during overhead work with dropped-object potential.
- **Position spotters:** Maintain clear lines of sight and authority to actively control access and intervene when needed.
- **Install barriers:** Use physical controls such as barricades or bunding to restrict object travel beyond the drop zone.
- **Supervise effectively:** Monitor compliance and maintain control of exclusion areas throughout the task.
- **Assess ground conditions:** Factor in hard or uneven surfaces that can increase rebound and secondary movement.

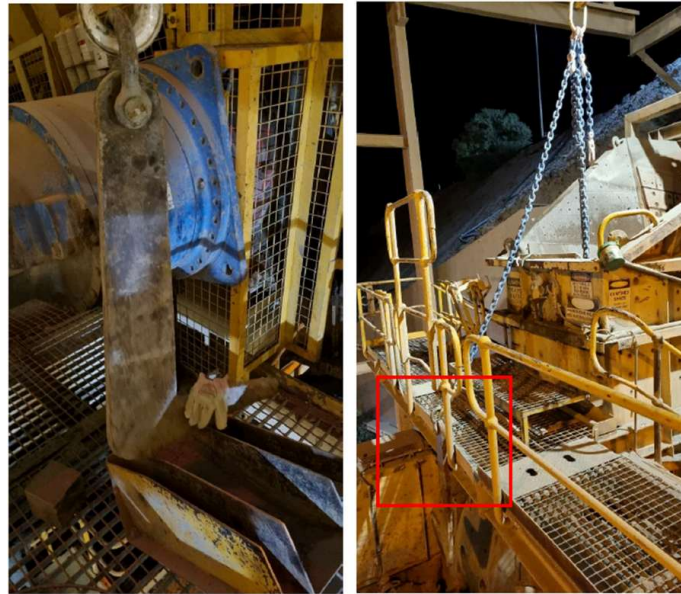
Rock hook ejection during crusher clearing injures worker

A worker sustained foot fractures and impact injuries after an 80 kg rock hook violently ejected during crusher blockage removal. The hook slipped under tension as workers attempted to remove a lodged rock from a primary jaw crusher chute.

Damaged or missing grizzly bars allowed oversize material to enter the crushing circuit and created repeated blockages. Workers used a non-engineered L-shaped hook to retrieve the material. When the hook disengaged, it released stored energy and propelled itself beyond the handrail, where it struck the worker on the platform. The task occurred at night, and workers operated in limited visibility without physical containment controls.

The incident shows how degraded primary controls and improvised tools expose workers to high-energy ejection and line-of-fire hazards. It demonstrates how

quickly routine clearing tasks escalate when workers fail to control stored energy and remain within the potential travel path.



The L-shaped hook (left) and its resting position after striking the worker (right)

Takeaways

- **Maintain primary controls:** Repair or replace grizzly bars to prevent oversize material entering the crushing circuit and creating blockages.
- **Use engineered equipment:** Select fit-for-purpose tools with fail-safe features for blockage removal tasks.
- **Control stored energy:** Install guarding, barriers or exclusion zones to contain ejection forces and projectile risks.
- **Remove personnel from risk:** Use remote systems such as rock breakers to keep workers clear of chutes and bins.
- **Verify competency:** Restrict high-risk crusher tasks to trained and authorised personnel.
- **Improve task conditions:** Provide adequate lighting and visibility during night operations.
- **Enforce procedures:** Maintain supervision and intervene when unsafe or improvised methods occur.

Hand tool kickback causes serious hand injury

A worker sustained a serious laceration to the left hand and thumb when a battery-powered cutting tool kicked back during vegetation clearing around an air-conditioning unit. The worker held a branch with one hand and operated the tool with the other.

As the blade engaged the branch, it bound and kicked back into the worker's hand. The blade cut through the glove and into the hand, while the glove partially stalled the tool and reduced injury severity. The worker used one-handed operation and placed the hand directly in the cutting path.

The incident shows how incorrect tool selection and poor positioning expose workers to kickback and line-of-fire hazards. It demonstrates how quickly routine tasks escalate when workers do not maintain control of cutting tools or keep hands clear of moving blades.



The battery-powered cutting tool

Takeaways

- **Select suitable tools:** Use equipment designed for vegetation cutting instead of powered cutting blades where practicable.

- **Maintain control:** Operate tools with both hands and ensure all handles remain fitted and functional.
- **Assess tasks:** Identify hazards, exposure points and safer methods before starting work.
- **Position safely:** Keep hands and body parts outside cutting paths at all times.
- **Plan work:** Schedule vegetation maintenance to reduce the need for reactive clearing.
- **Apply higher-order controls:** Do not rely on personal protective equipment as the primary means of protection.

More information

Help grow news alert audience and improve safety

Please share this news alert with your colleagues and encourage them to [subscribe](#) to WorkSafe's periodical mining-specific updates.

Subscribers to the WorkSafe Mines Safety news alerts receive around four emails each month, including the incident insights bulletins, which are also [available](#) on the SafetyLine Hub website.

Changed your email recently?

If you need to change or update your email address registered for the WorkSafe news alerts, please [contact us](#).

Follow us on



Visit www.worksafe.wa.gov.au to learn more about us.

[Home](#) [Privacy](#) [Disclaimer](#) [Copyright](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)