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## Monthly incident insights WorkSafe Mines Safety

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Note: Correct as of 16 March 2026.

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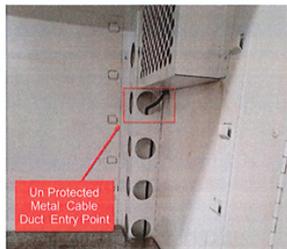
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### Reportable incidents

#### Battery charging cabinet cabling causes electric shock

Battery charging cabinets are increasingly used across mining operations to safely charge and store portable equipment batteries, including lithium battery systems. However, inspections and incident investigations have identified a potential electrical hazard associated with the internal cable management design of some cabinets.

In one incident, a worker received an electric shock while placing a device on charge inside a battery charging cabinet. The cabinet housed one power board, multiple chargers and several electrical leads, with some leads routed through an internal metal cable duct. Unprotected holes in the steel structure allowed the leads to pass through the metal trunking.



Investigators found that the edges of these openings were sharp and lacked mechanical edge protection. Over time, vibration and normal cable movement caused the PVC insulation on the electrical leads to rub against the sharp metal edges. This contact produced visible wear and marking on the cables—consistent with long-term abrasion—and created the potential for insulation damage and exposure of live conductors.

Damaged electrical cable insulation significantly increases the risk of electric shock if a worker handles or comes into contact with the affected lead during normal use. Similar cabinet designs are used across multiple mine sites, meaning the same hazard may exist at other operations if sites fail to identify and control the risk.

After identifying the hazard, the mine operator installed mechanical edge protection at the cable entry points of the battery charging cabinet to prevent further abrasion of the electrical leads.

### Takeaways

- **Inspect charging cabinets:** Electrical teams should inspect battery charging cabinets and similar equipment for signs of cable damage, abrasion or degraded insulation.
- **Identify sharp edge hazards:** Review cable routing within cabinets and enclosures to ensure electrical leads do not contact sharp metal edges.
- **Implement engineering controls:** Install mechanical edge protection, grommets or protective conduit wherever cables pass through metal ducting or cabinet structures.
- **Manage vibration-related wear:** Consider the long-term effects of vibration and cable movement when assessing electrical installations.

**Address hazards proactively:** Rectify design or installation issues that could damage insulation before they lead to electric shock incidents.

### Summary

Battery charging cabinets are widely used across mining operations, but poor cable routing and inadequate edge protection can introduce hidden electrical hazards. Sharp metal edges can gradually damage cable insulation, increasing the risk of electric shock during normal equipment use. Regular inspections and simple engineering controls—such as installing mechanical edge protection—can effectively eliminate this risk and help prevent future incidents.

### EWP in confined space at height traps operator

Mobile elevating work platforms (EWPs) are widely used across mining operations to provide safe access to elevated work areas. However, operating EWPs close to fixed structures or overhead plant can introduce significant hazards, including crushing, dropped objects and contact with surrounding infrastructure.

An incident investigation highlighted the serious risks of operating an EWP in confined spaces at height. Two workers were positioned in an EWP basket about 27 metres above ground while conducting survey measurements on a stacker structure to improve conveyor belt alignment. The task required them to position the basket close to the underside of the stacker conveyor frame.

During the task, the EWP operator unintentionally activated the control, causing the basket to move upward. As it rose, the EWP operator's head became trapped between the stacker structure and the secondary guarding sensor bar fitted to the basket. The base alarm activated, alerting the spotter, who immediately lowered the basket. Despite the rapid response, the EWP operator sustained injuries and briefly lost consciousness due to pressure on their neck.

### Takeaways

- **Identify crush hazards:** Assess work areas for potential entrapment or crushing points before positioning EWPs near structures or overhead plant.
- **Plan the task:** Conduct thorough risk assessments and implement controls to prevent exposure to entrapment hazards.
- **Use appropriate engineering controls:** Where practicable, select EWPs fitted with protective cages, secondary guarding systems or sensor devices designed to detect operator entrapment.
- **Establish effective communication:** Implement clear communication protocols between operators, spotters and other personnel involved in the task.
- **Ensure emergency preparedness:** Establish emergency response procedures that clearly outline actions for entrapment or entanglement incidents.
- **Confirm competency:** Ensure all EWP operators are trained, assessed as competent and authorised to operate the specific equipment.

## Summary

Operating EWPs near fixed structures can create significant entrapment and crushing hazards. Mine operators must identify and control these risks during both task planning and execution. Effective hazard identification, appropriate engineering controls, competent operators and clear communication are critical to preventing serious injuries when working at height. The [elevating work platforms](#) page on the WorkSafe website contains more guidance about this workplace risk.

## Propelled oxygen cylinder strikes two workers

Maintenance work involving compressed gas systems can create significant hazards if connections fail or stored energy is released unexpectedly. During scheduled maintenance of emergency response breathing apparatus equipment, an oxygen cylinder became a projectile and injured two workers.

As part of routine maintenance of closed-circuit breathing apparatus units used by a mine emergency response team, workers identified several oxygen cylinders that required refilling. A worker connected one cylinder to a compressor using the prescribed attachment in preparation for filling.

While the oxygen cylinder was being filled, it detached from the compressor connection. The sudden release of pressurised energy propelled the cylinder from the filling station. The cylinder struck one worker on the thigh, causing bruising, before continuing across the area and striking a second worker. The impact caused multiple lacerations to the worker's leg that required medical treatment.

The mine operator secured the area immediately after the incident, and emergency responders transported the worker with leg lacerations to hospital.

### Takeaways

- **Control stored energy:** Recognise the hazards associated with compressed gas systems and apply appropriate controls when filling cylinders.
- **Secure connections:** Check that cylinders and fittings are correctly installed, tightened and inspected before starting filling operations.
- **Eliminate line-of-fire exposures:** Position personnel outside potential projectile paths during pressurised gas-filling activities.
- **Implement engineering controls:** Consider using restraints, barriers or purpose-built filling stations designed to contain cylinders if a failure occurs.
- **Follow procedures:** Conduct cylinder-filling activities in accordance with manufacturer instructions and site procedures.
- **Train personnel:** Ensure workers who handle or fill compressed gas cylinders are trained, competent and understand the associated hazards.

### Summary

Compressed gas cylinders contain significant stored energy and can become dangerous projectiles if connections fail or equipment becomes unsecured. Workers must carefully plan and control maintenance and filling activities to prevent exposure to line-of-fire hazards. Thorough equipment checks, effective

engineering controls and strict adherence to safe work procedures are critical to preventing serious injuries.

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