

◀ HEALTH & SAFETY ALERT ▶



Safe Use of Plate Compactor

What Happened?

The IP was attempting to start a Wacker plate compactor when he pulled the cord which did not fully deploy, causing a dislocation to the tip of his right ring finger. The Operative was experienced in the use of this type of plant.

Root Causes:

- The IP did not undertake a dummy pull to get the machine turning over before exerting maximum force and failed to grasp the starter toggle in a manner which provided a secure grip.
- The IP was not aware of the risk associated with the starter cord/toggle during the operation due to the number of 'safe starts' they had previously experienced.

Considerations:

All sites are reminded to consider the following:

- Ensure that a task specific risk assessment is in place and relevant
- Ensure that plant inspection regime is place
- Record and communicate procedures through regular briefings and refresher training
- Consider replacing the corded starter mechanism on compactors with an electric push button
- Don't rush the operation
- Speak to your Supervisor or raise an observation / near miss if you have any concerns



Do not grip the toggle like this!



3. Grip the toggle between the fingers at the 1st knuckle.

1. Open the throttle by moving the lever downward.
2. To lubricate the engine, slowly pull out the cord to full extension.
4. Pull slowly until you feel some resistance.
5. Pull the cord briskly in a straight line.