Pre-Heater Tower: Minor Hotmeal Burn:PPE

WHAT HAPPENED

An operative suffered a minor hot meal burn to the back of his neck during pre-heater tower cleaning operations.

The hot meal entered the helmet through an opening in the cowl where the helmet adjuster had pulled through a silicon washer. He self- treated by putting water on the burn with help from his colleague. Immediate injury was redness and a small blister, both of which had dissipated by the following morning. He continued the shift with no problems.

The helmet type is a 3M M407 with fire retardant fabric top and shoulder cowl, specifically designed for foundry and similar work. The helmet is fitted with a head band adjuster wheel at the rear, beneath the fresh air inlet pipe. The area is usually covered by the fresh air supply hose so it is not easily visible. Helmets are serviced on a fortnightly basis and this one had been recently maintained.

The silicone washer is a snug fit over the adjuster; although it is possible for it to pull through if the cowl is pulled sharply. These helmets have been

used for around a year with no previous incident and are well liked by the team due to the level of protection they offer. Before work commences, the operatives do a “Buddy” check on each other’s gear. They have never specifically checked the adjuster as it has never before caused a problem.



Helmet

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

The equipment concerned is rather specialist and essential to the operation the tower cleaning teams carry out. However the principle of checking PPE for wear, damage and failure is equally valid elsewhere and is to be encouraged.

Specific to this incident actions have been identified as follows.

- Formalise a recorded equipment check system prior to beginning work. This will be drawn up with the operatives input.

- Check whether an alternative shroud is available without the silicone washer arrangement.

- Make other plants using similar equipment aware of the incident

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LOCATION:	**CEMENT PLANT**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**MAINTENANCE & HOUSEKEEPING**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**08/02/2014 13:48:50**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**N/A**	**INCIDENT No:**	**00375**