

HAZARD ALERT

RISK MANAGEMENT SECTION



Department of
Environment and Conservation

Date: 5/01/2011

Alert No: 15

Source:

Internal

External

Author: RMS / FMS

Identified Hazard: Dangers of standing next to burning rubbish

Risk Rating:

Low

Moderate

High

Significant

Nature of Incident: Injury Property Damage Near-hit

Other:

Description of Incident:

During a prescribed burn in spring 2010 the heat from edging caused an unopened beer bottle that had been stashed in the bush to explode. There was approximately 40 old bottles in the bush adjacent to the burn boundary. Two personnel were standing next to the bottles on the burn boundary when one of the bottles exploded with a deafening crack. Glass was projected at high velocity striking one and narrowly missing another employee. A third section of glass struck the side of a DEC truck.

Incident Time and Date:

15 October 2010, 10:00am

Recommendations:

Inform all employees of the dangers of standing next to burning rubbish of any kind (including dumped cars, household refuse, industrial dumping, tyres, farm waste etc). Anything in rubbish that is a liquid in a sealed container has the potential to explode exposing personnel to shrapnel hazard. Dumped rubbish may also contain components that are toxic in their own right or emit toxic fumes when burnt. Standing well clear and upwind of any burning rubbish is recommended.

If rubbish containing potentially dangerous or toxic substances is identified in an area to be burnt this situation should be brought to the attention of the supervisor and a decision made to remove it (if safe to do so) or to exclude it from the burn.

Further advice could be sought from Environmental Hazards Branch.

Produced by Risk Management Section