

## Safe Work Instruction - Clearing of Sewer Chokes

**DO NOT use this plant\* or complete this task unless you have been inducted in its safe use and operation by an Authorised Experienced Operator**

This SWI may not cover all possible hazards and risks and should be referred to as a control measure in the risk assessment process. Additional training may be required for high risk plant. Site and task may change required PPE.

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



Eye protection must be worn



Long and loose hair must be contained or covered.



Hand protection must be worn



Foot protection must be worn



High visibility clothing must be worn



Hearing protection must be worn

### POTENTIAL HAZARDS AND RISKS

- i Entanglement**  
Entanglement in moving parts
- i Manual Task Injury**  
Manual task injury from repetitive movements  
Manual task injury from incorrect manual handling techniques
- i Exposure to High Pressure Fluid**  
Injury from exposure to high pressure fluids
- i Other**  
Burn injury  
Hearing damage from excessive noise  
Injury due to plant malfunction or misuse
- i Explosion**  
Explosion of gases, vapours or liquids
- i Cutting, Stabbing or Puncturing**  
Injury from sharp or flying object  
Injury from work pieces being ejected  
Injury from contact with moving parts
- i Slip, Trips, Falls**  
Slip, trip, fall due to uneven or slippery work surfaces
- i Struck by Moving Object**  
Struck by moving object due to work pieces being ejected  
Injury to worker due to being struck by moving traffic

### PRE-OPERATIONAL SAFETY CHECKS

- ✓ Complete site-specific risk assessment
- ✓ Complete visual plant check prior to operation
- ✓ Ensure you are familiar with plant operations and controls
- ✓ Ensure that guards are fitted, secured and functional in accordance with manufacturers guidelines
- ✓ Check for overhead electrical power above the work area
- ✓ Check manholes either side of discharge/complaint to ascertain location of blockage
- ✓ Ensure all correct PPE is being used for each task and application

### OPERATING PROCEDURES

- ✓ Keep clear of moving plant parts
- ✓ Operate plant to the conditions of the work area
- ✓ During choke clearance work, prevent public access to sewerage choke clearing work area – where required by safety cones or barrier boards
- ✓ Ensure to operate in well-lit areas or have adequate lighting if working at night
- ✓ When using Water Jetter, endeavour to clear the choke
  - From the downstream manhole
  - By using the smallest nozzle and allowing the machine to work at its own pace keeping the

- nozzle slightly away from the obstruction to minimise nozzle blockage
- ✓ For a boundary riser blockage place foot over riser cap and remove screws slowly to relieve pressure/after pressure has gone
- ✓ If riser is full, use a plunger to try to force the choke out of the riser watching out for back pressure in the line. If the pressure builds up simply tilt the plunger slightly back to break the seal and release the pressure
- ✓ Always ensure that toilet seats are down and sink plugs are in place prior to plunging as back splashing may also occur in these areas. If choke is still there use Water Jetter.
- ✓ When using Water Jetter select the smallest nozzle and run machine at an idle until the obstruction is reached then hold nozzle just off choke, slowly increasing machine to operating pressure
- ✓ If any doubt about a safety aspect of a sewerage choke clearance exists, **contact the Co-ordinator immediately**
- ✓ In the event of an incident advise the relevant Coordinator of –
  - Person injured
  - Nature of injury
  - Location of work area
  - Also, worker is to support any emergency service personnel e.g. Ambulance to assist in the evacuation of injured worker

**ENDING OPERATIONS**

- ✓ Ensure plant is in good working order and stored in the appropriate location
- ✓ Ensure nothing is left in the work area that could present a safety hazard to others
- ✓ Clean up and bag or garbage bin chokes and debris. Splash disinfectant around manhole and affected areas
- ✓ Ensure worker has relevant SDS available if using Sewercide (chemical) and refer to SDS for correct usage of this product. Sewercide is generally used after the choke is cleared for prevention.

**DO NOT**

- ✗ Do not use if plant is faulty. Attach an Out of Service tag and report fault to your supervisor
- ✗ Do not leave plant running unattended
- ✗ Do not use large auger to clear a choke from the downstream side
- ✗ Do not place gloved hands in direct contact with rotating rods
- ✗ Do not force the plunger down quickly as back splashing may occur
- ✗ Do not use mobile phone while operating plant

**\*Plant in this SWI refers to any machinery, equipment, appliance, container, implement and tool.**