

## Procedures for Clearing Choked Legs

Date: April 1989

Revision Date: 06 June 2007



During grain transfer activities inside elevators, the grains are moved from bins and tanks via conveyors, grain augers and bucket legs. If the feed valves allow the grain to enter the leg too quickly, the material will “choke” the leg, causing the belt to strain and slip at the head and boot. As the leg continues to fill with grain, the grain will begin to fall down the opposite leg and depending on the construction of the leg, can be easily heard by the operator.

The OSHA Regulations for Grain Handling Facilities has specific requirements for clearing legs after a choke has occurred. Because legs may become obstructed for many reasons and without proper training in recognizing and clearing a choked leg, the results may include fire, damaged or broken belts.

The following steps are in place to ensure that when a leg does choke, the operator will be able to properly clear the obstruction without incident:

- Shut off the grain flow to the leg
- Turn off power to the leg and lock/tag at the energy source to prevent unauthorized or accidental startup during leg cleaning
- Contact location management and report situation. Provide management with suspect cause of incident
- Inspect the head and boot of the leg – check for signs of heat, proceed with caution and attempt to cool the bearing.
- If not heat is discovered, open the leg boot and remove accumulated grain.

***NOTE: Once the leg is cleared, remove the spilled or residual grain from the boot to minimize the accumulation of material in the area.***

- Clear all buckets – check for damaged or missing buckets.
- At the discharge point of the leg, check for obstruction or damage to the equipment
- Inspect the belt alignment at the head and boot pulleys. Realign if necessary. If unsure if belt requires realignment, contact management for assistance.
- Inspect the belt at the splice – ensure that the fasteners are secure
- Remove the lock/tag from the energy source and with an individual stationed at the leg, restart the leg to monitor leg operation and alignment. Allow the leg to operate long enough to assure that the choke has been cleared and the leg is running normally

# LEG CLEARING PROCEDURES

1. If leg chokes, shut off leg
2. Stop flow of grain to the elevator leg
3. Contact location Manager and advise him/her of the situation
4. **NEVER JOG BELT THROUGH A CHOKE** (Jogging a belt may damage the belt or create friction that may heat a bearing or motor to the point of fire)
5. Turn off power to the leg and apply locks and/tags to prevent accidental restart of the leg by another employee
6. Inspect head pulley lagging, leg belt and splice, buckets, and motor drive belts. Verify that there is no excessive heat or fire at the motor or bearings (should be cold to the touch)
7. Clear all buckets of material
8. At the boot, open trap and clean out boot
9. Recheck alignment of Head and Tail Pulleys and belt
10. Inspect belt splice
11. Remove all spilled or accumulated materials from boot pit