



J. H. FLETCHER & CO. Box 2187 – Huntington, WV 25722-2187 – 304/525-7811 – FAX 304/525-4025

# IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE

INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 116

**TO: ALL OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF J.H. FLETCHER & CO.  
ROOF BOLTERS**

**FROM: J.H. FLETCHER & CO.  
RISK MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

**DATE: JUNE 2010**

**SUBJECT: HANDS OFF ROTATING DRILL TOOLS**

For decades, J.H. Fletcher & Co. ("Fletcher") has notified machine owners and operators regarding the danger involved in holding onto or grabbing/reaching for rotating drill tools (bolt, spanner, wrench, steel, extension, "dolly", driver, chisel, etc.), or bolts when operating a roof bolting machine. There is NO circumstance when it is safe or proper for an operator to hold onto or to touch a rotating drill tool or bolt. Fletcher has provided various systems, Operator's Manual use instructions, notices and training sessions to both owners and operators regarding the need for the operator to not hold or touch a rotating drill tool or bolt during drilling or bolt installation. Every roof bolting machine manufactured by Fletcher has warning decals affixed that instruct the operator not to hold onto or touch a rotating drill tool or bolt.

Fletcher recently learned of an accident in South Africa where a roof bolt operator was injured when she caught her rubber gloved hand around a rotating drill tool. This incident resulted in amputation of a limb. Preliminary information obtained by Fletcher does not disclose the existence of any facts that would have caused her to have her hand on the drill tool when it was rotating.

A rotating drill tool or bolt is an open and obvious hazard inherent to the roof bolting function. There is never a reason why an operator should hold onto or touch a rotating drill tool or bolt. The tragic and devastating life and limb threatening consequences of holding onto or touching a rotating drill tool or bolt are obvious.

Fletcher has, and will continue to, publish product use instructions that address this open and obvious hazard. Each owner of a Fletcher roof bolter needs to do the following:

1. Reemphasize to all personnel to maintain a hands off drill tool and bolt approach when operating a roof drill. Specific emphasis should be made that wearing gloves, especially rubber gloves, and placing a hand on or grabbing for a rotating drill tool or bolt, could snag the hand on rotating object, resulting in immediate injury. For additional information see Fletcher Information Bulletin No. 27 available on the Fletcher website, [www.jhfletcher.com](http://www.jhfletcher.com).
2. After training the operators on this issue, provide them a Fletcher hard hat sticker (see enclosed, part no. 500260) for placement on their hard hat. Providing them the sticker will do two things: (1) it will add emphasis to your training; and (2) it will be a quick confirmation to you that the employee has been trained on this important safety alert.
3. Display the enclosed poster (part no. 500259) to reinforce the need to maintain hands off drill tools at all times.
4. Review your roof bolter to confirm that it is equipped with each of the Fletcher design systems that eliminate the need for touching the drill steel after insertion into the drill chuck: hydraulic drill guides (mast feed), mechanical drill guide, and deep chucks. Please contact a Fletcher sales or service representative if you are unsure about the status of your machine or otherwise need additional information.
5. Emphasize to your operators that they should have the correct drilling supplies (deep chuck, drill steels, wrenches, etc.) and that they should inspect their supplies at the beginning of each shift to ensure they are in good condition for drilling.
6. Review the warning tags near the drilling station. Make sure all tags that are identified in the operator's manual are at or near the drilling mechanism. If tag number 159543 is not at or near the drilling mechanism, call Fletcher direct. Identify the serial number of the machine you want to put the tag on and we will send you the designated tag(s) at no cost.
7. Fletcher believes this safety alert should be enacted as soon as possible. If this notice does not contain enough posters or hard hat stickers for use during retraining, please contact David Cooper at (304) 525-7811, Ext. 240.

**! DANGER**



**NEVER** touch or hold onto a rotating drilling tool, wrench, or bolt.

**ALWAYS** use "Hands Off" drilling method.

SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH CAN OCCUR.

FLETCHER © PART NO. 500259

**DANGER**



**HANDS OFF**

J.H. FLETCHER® Part No. 500260