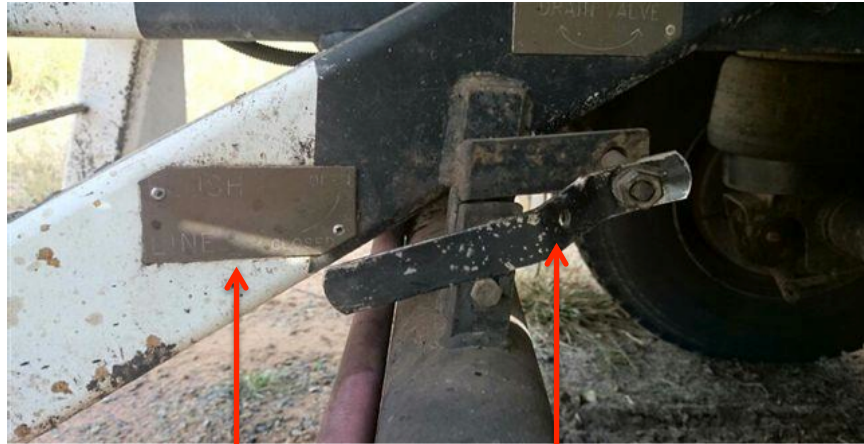


Bitumen sprayed onto face of Truck Driver



Bitumen on truck driver's face was spread, due to the operator trying to cool his face with a damp cloth



Valve signage

Valve handle

Details

A truck driver had started to pump bitumen into a dog trailer unaware the flush line was open. The flush line then stood up and squirted bitumen onto the operator's right shoulder and face.

At the time of the incident, the truck driver was wearing a balaclava & face shield however, due to the driver's positioning and the balaclava not being worn properly, the bitumen was still able to make contact with the driver's face.

Explanation

The line being pumped through was blocked with cold bitumen and the pressure build up force the hot bitumen through the flush line. The truck operator checked the valve before the commencement of pumping and believed that he had shut the valve. The truck operator turned the valve to what he thought was the closed position (which in fact was the open position).

The truck operator was not wearing the required PPE in the correct manner.

Immediately after the incident, the operator grabbed the water from his truck cabin rather than use a fully operational emergency shower mounted nearby.

Safety Tips

Review all valves involved in bitumen transfer. Labels to clearly indicate the open and closed positions of the valve handle.

Ensure when undertaking bitumen transfer PPE is worn in the correct manner.

Review the procedure to pumping bitumen into dog trailer, where fitted, use the overhead fill point to avoid contact with cold bitumen blockages during the pump in process.

Complete regular emergency response drills to ensure operators are fully aware of the procedures and emergency equipment available to them

Injured worker was able to provide doctors with the AAPA Bitumen Burns card, resulting in effective treatment of the burn. Driver returned to work the next day.