Core Drilling Safety

Considerable time and effort are spent planning a core drilling operation, but attention is not always given to the safety of the drill crew. Many people have been killed or have suffered amputations, cuts or other serious injuries from contact with drilling equipment. Whether the contact is intentional or not, the results can be serious and severe. Operators of core drills must read and understand the manufacturer’s operating manual and safety requirements for each piece of equipment used. When drilling, always wear personal protective equipment required by local, state or federal standards including, but not limited to, hard hat, hearing protection, safety glasses and safety footwear. A high visibility vest is required for roadwork.

Below is a list of precautions that will help minimize and prevent injury when operating a core drill. Following these recommendations will reduce the chance of serious injury or death.

- Do not wear loose fitting clothing and jewelry while operating equipment. Always keep hands and clothing away from all moving parts.

- Make sure electrical equipment such as cords, generators, hoses and fittings are in good condition.

- Inspect the backside of the work area. Make sure there are no obstructions such as electrical or gas lines. If you cannot inspect the area, get assurances there are no hazards.

- When drilling floors of suspended slabs, make sure the area below is properly secure and keep everyone away from the area of falling cores.

- When drilling large diameter holes through walls, an additional drop-in anchor is recommended to give more strength to holding the drill in place. Secure the mast with extra bracing and make sure the concrete has sufficient strength to support the drill in areas where the anchor is placed.

- When using suction vacuum pads to secure the drill to the floor, make sure of proper suction to the floor before starting the drill motor. Never remove the core bit from the drill motor by putting a wrench on the bit and starting the drill motor.

- When lifting the core drill onto the wall for mounting, first mount the stand to the wall and slide the carriage onto the stand in order to eliminate lower back strain. Anchor the core drill directly above or below the hole whenever possible.