For guidance on managing construction health risks go to
www.hse.gov.uk/construction

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Power Float

The rules and procedures in force where people are at work may require the person responsible for this equipment to carry out a specific risk assessment

It is important to read all of this leaflet BEFORE you use the Power Float

1. Plan your work and think ahead to make sure you will always be working safely..
2. If you have not used this type of power float before, familiarise yourself with how the machine works before you start on the main task.
3. Petrol is highly flammable. Take care not to cause a fire or explosion.
4. Cement mixes are harmful to eyes, lungs and skin. Take precautions to prevent contact with cement mix.
5. This power float is designed to machine-trowel large areas of fresh concrete surface to a smooth finish. It is not designed for any other purpose.
6. The action of this power float can cause injury or damage if the machine is not used in a careful and controlled way.
7. You must have at least the following items of personal protective equipment: goggles:; dust mask- a minimum of FFP3 protection; ear muffs or plugs giving protection for levels up to 87dB(A); Safety boots; industrial gloves.
8. A personal first-aid kit should be available.
9. This machine must not be used by young persons, or by anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
10. This power float is designed for operation by an able bodied adult. Anyone with either a temporary or permanent disability must seek expert advice before using it.
11. Power floats are heavy machines, get help if you have to unload it from your vehicle. Do not lift beyond your own capabilities.

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Using the Power Float

1. Protective equipment including ear defenders, dust mask, goggles and safety boots must be worn at all times.
2. When starting the engine the float blade will not rotate until the clutch lever is pulled in on the right side of the handlebars. The blade will stop as soon as this lever is released.
3. The throttle lever is on the left side of the handlebars. To get best results when trowelling, set the engine speed as fast as possible.
4. The blade adjustment wheel is in the centre of the handlebars; use this to adjust the angle of the blades.
5. With the engine running and the blades turning the power float can be moved easily, push down on the handle to move right and lift up on the handle to move left.
6. Do not leave the power float in one position too long with the blades rotating or an uneven surface will be created.
7. Stop the engine if leaving the machine unattended.
8. The power float must be cleaned, especially the blades, as soon as work is finished before the concrete goes hard.
9. Always store the power float in its upright position.
10. If the equipment does not work properly do not attempt to repair it. Contact the hire company.
11. You may want to read this leaflet again. Please keep it safely until you finish work.

GETTING GOOD RESULTS

1. Set the engine speed as fast as possible.
2. Don't trowel too much. Excessive trowelling brings fine material to the surface. This makes the concrete too firm and prone to cracking or dusting.

FLOAT TROWELLING

1. Float trowelling uses a float blade to produce a smooth finish which, if needed, can be fine trowelled afterwards.
2. Start float trowelling when concrete is hard enough for an average man to walk on it and leave only a shallow footprint (up to 3mm or 1/8" deep).
3. Before starting, fill in any minor holes with fresh concrete.
4. If suction mats have been used on the concrete, start float trowelling as soon as they are removed.
5. The machine should be moved in wide sweeping movements so that it doesn't stay too long on the same area of concrete, causing holes.

FINE TROWELLING

1. Fine trowelling uses a finish blade to produce a fine surface.
2. To check that concrete is ready for fine trowelling, press the palm of your hand against the surface. If concrete sticks to your hand, it's too soon to start work.
3. As a rule, two passes of the machine are needed for fine trowelling. The angle of the blades can be adjusted on the machine.
4. On the first pass, set the blade at a slight angle to avoid putting the surface of the concrete under too much pressure.
5. The second pass should be left for as long as possible, but before the concrete has set too hard.

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Before Starting Work...

POWER FLOAT

1. Check engine, power float and equipment. If anything is found to be damaged, do not use the power float - contact the hire company.
2. Adjust the height of the handlebars to suit by undoing the clamp half way down the handlebar stem, and raising or lowering the top half of the handlebars. Make sure the clamp is re-tightened.
3. Find out how to switch the engine off. Before starting the power float locate the off switch.
4. When the work is finished, make sure the power float is washed clean before any cement mix on it hardens.

BLADES

1. Different types of blades are available for different finishes. Contact the hire company if you require different blades.
2. To change the blades, first ensure the engine is stopped and safe. Wearing gloves to keep the cement mix off your hands, undo the wing nut on the top of each blade inside the guard rings, and remove and replace each blade in turn. Always replace all four blades.
3. Always make sure the blades are clean. Do not allow any cement mix to harden on the blades.

REFUELLING

1. No smoking.
2. Stop the engine and let it cool down.
3. If possible move the machine away from the work area.
4. Clean the filler cap and the area around it to prevent dirt falling into the fuel tank.
5. Use a funnel and clean petrol when refuelling. Do not spill any fuel on yourself or the machine.
6. Wipe any fuel off the machine. Dispose of fuel soaked cloth carefully.
7. If very small amounts of fuel are spilt on the ground, wipe it up or cover it with soil.
8. If any fuel is spilt on clothes, change them straight away.
9. Put all fuel caps back on properly, and move the fuel can to a safe, cool place.

STARTING THE ENGINE

1. If the hire company has supplied special instructions, follow them. Otherwise, follow the instructions below.
2. Check the fuel and oil levels.
3. Turn the fuel tap on and close the choke lever.
4. Open the throttle control a little.
5. Make sure the machine is held firmly so it will not move when the starter is pulled.
6. Pull the starter handle slowly until you can feel that the starter has engaged with the engine, then pull it quickly and strongly. Don't pull it too far, or it may break.
7. Guide the cord back into place so that it recoils correctly.
8. If the engine has started adjust the throttle so the engine is idling. As the engine warms up open the choke lever.
9. To stop the engine, close the throttle lever, and turn the fuel tap off.

CEMENT MIXES AND CONTACT DERMATITIS

1. Wet cement mix is a substance that can cause contact dermatitis.
2. Contact dermatitis is a rash that may occur when the skin reacts to certain substances. The rash can vary but it is usually itchy and causes flaky skin and only occurs where the substance is in contact with the skin.
3. Wash cement or plaster mixes from your skin immediately. Thoroughly rinse eyes and seek medical advice without delay.
4. Mild dermatitis will heal providing there is no further contact. If the rash persists seek medical advice. Learn more about contact dermatitis – visit www.bcds.org.uk
5. Gloves, long sleeves and full trousers must be worn to prevent the mixes coming into contact with bare skin.

WORK AREA

1. Do not use this machine where there is a danger of explosion. It will ignite fumes from petrol, or gas cylinders.
2. Using this equipment indoors or in confined spaces could cause **fatal** carbon monoxide poisoning. **Never** use it in domestic premises and only use it in other indoor situations if its suitability and the ventilation required has been **fully** assessed. Mechanical extraction ventilation will almost always be required.
3. Make sure the work area is clear and safe and that no-one is close by and could cause distractions.
4. Protect other people from the noise and dust. Set up an exclusion zone around the area where the power float is being used with physical barriers, barrier tape and signs. Keep children and animals away when using this equipment.
5. Anybody who is working close by will also need to wear identical personal protective equipment.
6. The following items of personal protective equipment (PPE) are the minimum that should be worn whenever this poker vibrator is used. Particular jobs or environments may require a higher level of protection. Ensure there is no loose or flapping clothing that could get caught in the machinery.

OPERATORS

1. This equipment is likely to cause noise levels up to 96 dB(A) - wear appropriate ear muffs or plugs giving hearing protection for this level as a minimum.
2. An appropriate dust mask (with a minimum of FFP3 protection) must be worn when you are in contact with material that causes dust.
3. Safety boots/wellingtons must be worn.
4. Industrial quality gloves, long sleeves and full trousers must be worn to prevent the mixes coming into contact with bare skin.
5. Clear the area of trip hazards e.g. rubble, rubbish etc.
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