Cold Water Treatment Of Thermal Burns Fatality File



Man suffers serious burns in workplace explosion near Wollongong

Shortly after 2.30pm today emergency services were called to a property in Berkeley following reports of an explosion and a man suffering burns to the front half of his body.

Four NSW Ambulance crews were dispatched to the location where they treated a 49-year-old man for burns to his arms, chest and legs.

The man was rushed to hospital in a serious condition.

NSW Ambulance Duty Operations Manager Chief Inspector Norm Rees said serious burns can often be fatal.

“Arriving at a scene where a patient is suffering severe burns is very intense – your mind tends to race until you get to them and see the extent of the injuries,” Chief Inspector Rees said.

“The main concern around that would be if the patient had any airway involvement, because that creates fairly rapid onset of swelling, which can cause breathing problems and essentially the airway to close over.”

Chief Inspector Rees advised treating those with suspected burns by applying cool water immediately.

“No matter what, never transport anyone suffering burns directly to hospital without cooling the area first – this can be extremely dangerous as the longer you wait to cool the burn, the worse the injury can become,” Chief Inspector Rees said.

“We urge people to make sure they run the burn under cool water immediately, but definitely not ice, and if it is a large area of burns, maybe run a shower.