



Machine Guarding Safety



Crushed hands and arms, severed fingers and limbs, lacerations and abrasions – the list of possible machinery-related injuries is long and horrifying. Many hazards are created by moving machine parts. Safeguards are essential for protecting workers from preventable injuries.

Safeguards must meet these minimum general requirements:

Prevent contact: The safeguard must prevent hands, arms, and any other part of a worker's body from making contact with dangerous moving parts.

Secure: Workers should not be able to easily remove or tamper with the safeguard, because a safeguard that can easily be made ineffective is no safeguard at all.

Protect from falling objects: The safeguard should ensure that no objects can fall into moving parts. A small tool which is dropped into a cycling machine could easily become a projectile that could strike and injure someone.

Create no new hazards: A safeguard defeats its own purpose if it creates a hazard of its own such as a shear point, a jagged edge, or an unfinished surface which can cause a laceration.

Training: Even the most elaborate safeguarding system cannot offer effective protection unless the worker knows how to use it and why. Specific and detailed training is a crucial part of any effort to provide safeguarding against machine-related hazards. Thorough operator training should involve training in the following:

- A description and identification of the hazards associated with particular machines
- The safeguards themselves, how they provide protection, and the hazards for which they are intended
- How to use the safeguards and why
- How and under what circumstances safeguards can be removed, and by whom (in most cases, repair or maintenance personnel only)
- When a lockout/tagout program is required