Machine Guarding

Machine guards are your first line of defense against injuries caused by machine operations. Each machine must have adequate safeguards to protect the operators from the machine's hazards.

FIVE GENERAL METHODS OF SAFEGUARDS

GUARDS

- These are physical barriers that prevent contact. They can be fixed, interlocked, adjustable or self adjusting.

DEVICES

- These limit or prevent access to the hazardsous area. These devices can be: presence-sensing devices, pullback or restraint straps, safety trip controls, two hand controls or gates.

AUTOMATED FEED & EJECTION MECHANISMS

- These eliminate the operator's exposure to the point of operation while handling stock.

MACHINE LOCATION or DISTANCE

- This method removes the hazard from the operator's work area.

MISCELLANEOUS AIDS

- These methods can be used to protect both operators and people in the area. Examples include: shields to contain chips, sparks or sprays; hodling tools that an operator uses to handle materials going into the point of operations; and awareness barriers to warn people about the hazards in the area.

Missing or Damaged Guards

Report a machine that is missing a guard. It is unsafe to operate the machine until the guard is replaced. If your inspection shows a damaged guard, also report it. The damaged guard may not be providing adequate protection. If a guard becomes damaged while you are operating the machine, stop the machine and have the guard inspected. It may need to be replaced or repaired before you can continue to work safely.

Maintenance Allowed During Normal Operation

Routine adjustments or lubrication that can be done without removing or bypassing a guard may be done without taking any extra precautions.

Ask your supervisor about extra precautions that need to be taken if routine or repeated adjustment, tool changes or other minor work requires that a guard be removed or bypassed.

Know When to Use Lockout/Tagout

If unexpected machine start-up could cause injury, use a lockout/tagout program. Any major repair or tool change that would expose workers to the machine's hazards requires lockout/tagout. For example, if a machine gets jammed, and a guard has to be removed or bypassed in order to remove the jam, the machine needs to be locked out to protect the person who is reaching into the point of operation to clear it.

Responding to Injuries and Accidents

Machine entrapment injuries can be severe. Follow your company's procedures for reporting the injury to management and for calling emergency medical personnel.