

Machine Guarding

Today, most machinery at most workplaces are equipped with guarding. The dramatic improvement in guarding over the years has meant fewer employees sustaining the crushing injuries that used to occur all too frequently. With more than 92,000 injuries and 800 deaths occurring every year to employees who operate and maintain machinery, it's very important that guarding is used on all machinery.

Hazards of Machine Operation:

With the potential for amputations, fractures, lacerations, and the crushing of body parts, which accounts for approximately 18,000 of the injuries every year, it's vital that we identify the hazards of machine operation and protect all employees from these hazards. Some of the most common hazards of machine operation are:

- Hit by flying debris
- Puncture from parts
- Rotating parts
- Pinch points
- Wrap points
- Shear points
- Crush points
- Point of operation
- Caught between points

Types of Machine Guarding:

Machine guarding is there to prevent injuries and should never be tampered with. It is to everyone's advantage to make sure all guarding is in place. The following are some machine safeguards that are commonly used:

- Fixed guards
- Interlocking guards
- Adjustable guards
- Self-adjusting guards
- Light curtains
- Pullback devices
- Palm presses
- Gates/distance

Other Key Points to Remember:

- Before turning on machinery, check that the guards are in place
- Never remove, defeat, reach around or under a safeguard
- Never operate machinery that is missing a guard
- Contact a supervisor if a guard is missing or damaged
- Lockout tagout machinery if a guard needs to be removed