SAFETY UNLIMITED, Inc.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Your Safety Is Our Business®

Volume 1, Issue 31 August 3rd, 2014

Machine Guards

Employee exposure to unguarded or inadequately guarded machines is prevalent in many workplaces. Consequently, workers who operate and maintain machinery suffer approximately 18,000 amputations, lacerations, crushing injuries to fingers and hands, burns, abrasions, blindness, and over 800 deaths per year. Amputation is one of the most severe and crippling types of injuries in the occupational workplace and often results in permanent disability or even death. This is why we should guard our machines to protect all employees from those dangers.

The basic purpose for guarding is to protect not prohibit, though guards are often looked upon by employees as obstacles. However, guards are there for protection. Machine guards are used to protect against direct contact with moving parts. There are also guards designed to protect against flying chips, kickbacks of metal, and splashing of harmful liquids. Other guards protect against human failures.

However, guards are engineered to give as much protection as possible, even to machine operators who deliberately take chances or who are distracted or emotionally upset on the job.

Unfortunately, even with best machine guard engineering designs in place, many individuals and businesses will ignore the use of machine guards. While guards may often appear to be a hindrance, overall they have proven to be otherwise. They've made large contributions to both security and production. Greater machine speeds have been made possible through proper guarding and employees work with greater confidence knowing that a machine offers maximum protection.

Two types of guards are used to protect machine operators. Most of us have been involved with one or the other. These are fixed guards and interlocking and gate guards.

Fixed guards are most commonly used and are preferred over others, the obvious reason being that the fixed guards protect us from dangerous parts of machines at all times. Fixed guards may only be adjusted by authorized persons.

Interlocking guards are used if a fixed guard is not practical. This type of guard will not allow the machine to operate until dangerous parts are guarded. The interlocking guard is designed to disconnect the source of power from the machine. Safety devices such as pullbacks, sweeps, and electronic devices are used where neither a fixed or interlocking guard can be used satisfactorily.

Safety devices are operated by the machine itself. When this type of guard is used on a machine that is loaded and unloaded by hand, the operator must use hand tools.

No machine guard can do the job without the cooperation of the person operating the machine. The bottom line is unguarded machinery is very dangerous. When an employee starts work, we attempt to explain the job thoroughly. This includes calling attention to guarding devices. After that, if there are any questions concerning guards or any other part of the job, the answers should be sought from the supervisor. But again it should be noted that the employee's attitude toward safety is important.

It is important that everyone working with or around machinery understands the generally accepted safe procedures for this type of work. No guard shall be adjusted or removed unless the supervisor gives permission or the employee concerned is specifically trained and the adjustment is considered a normal part of the job.

In addition, no machine should be started without guards in place. If you see that guards are missing or defective, report it to your supervisor immediately. When guards or safety devices are removed for repair or adjustment, the power for the machine should be turned off and the main switch locked and tagged.

A final point concerns safe dress. Loose clothing, neckties, watches, rings, or other jewelry should not be worn around mechanical equipment. In fact, as most of you already know, these items of apparel are considered dangerous on many jobs.

Everyone wants to work safely. To do so, you must have a mature respect for machinery and for safeguards. They both will do the job for you if you let them

Open the Door to Safety: Awareness is the Key!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests

