

# Machine Guards

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

Today most machines at worksites are equipped with guards. In the past decade, guarding has improved dramatically. Because of this, fewer employees are sustaining the crushing injuries that used to occur all too frequently.

Guards are installed to protect operators and others in the area from injury. Yet some operators continually find ways of putting themselves in danger by removing machine guards or tampering with interlocks so they can operate the machines faster.

### Note to Discussion Leader

At this time mention the guards on the various pieces of equipment in your area and describe how they protect employees from injuries. (Example: The V-belt drive guards, barrier guards, motor-coupling guards, two hand control devices and electric-eye beams.) Often it is necessary to remove a guard to service or adjust a machine, a tool or a piece of equipment. When doing this, be sure the power is turned off and the switch is locked out or tagged out. When the service job is completed, make sure the guard is replaced securely and is working properly.

Breakdowns, jammed work and broken parts sometimes cause us to forget ordinary safety procedures. Very often, to remedy these conditions it is necessary to get into out-of-the-way places. Extreme caution is needed, because in some cases the location of the trouble cannot be guarded. So be sure that basic and added precautions are taken to avoid any movement of the parts.

### To prevent accidents, be careful around

1. Meshing gears
2. In-running rollers
3. Reciprocating parts
4. Chain and sprocket drives
5. Cams and rollers
6. Belts and pulleys
7. Flywheels
8. Cutting or abrasive surfaces
9. Cooling fans

10. Conveyor equipment
11. Rotating couplings and shafts
12. Hot or overheated parts
13. Warm gears

Other hazards may exist, depending on the type of operation. For the well being of everyone, see that guards are replaced properly. If you see a piece of equipment without a guard, or any other unsafe condition, report it to your supervisor immediately, whether the equipment is in your work area or elsewhere.

Remember, it pays to double-check guards. You could save a hand, an arm or a life. Guards are there to prevent injuries. Don't tamper with them. Let them do their job protecting you from injury.

If an injury has occurred recently because someone operated a piece of machinery without a guard or because someone tampered with the safety controls, describe the circumstances and details of the accident, but do not attempt to embarrass the employee who was injured. No one likes to suffer embarrassment in front of others.

## **GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW**

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

## **ENDING THE MEETING**

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

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Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

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### **Comments**

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