Machine Guarding – Landscaping Stats and Facts



FACTS

Key hazards related to machine guarding in the landscaping industry

1. **Contact with Moving Parts:** Inadequate or missing machine guards can expose workers to moving parts of equipment such as blades, belts, and gears. This can lead to lacerations, amputations, and crushing injuries.
2. **Entanglement:** Loose clothing, jewelry, or body parts can become entangled in unguarded machinery. This is particularly dangerous with rotating parts like augers or chainsaws.
3. **Flying Debris:** Lack of proper guards on equipment like lawnmowers and trimmers can result in debris being ejected at high speeds. This poses a risk of eye injuries, cuts, or bruises to workers.
4. **Bypassing Guards:** Workers may bypass or remove guards to expedite work, leading to direct exposure to hazardous parts of the machinery. This practice significantly increases the risk of accidents and injuries.
5. **Inadequate Maintenance:** Guards that are not regularly inspected and maintained can become loose, damaged, or ineffective, failing to protect workers from moving parts.
6. **Inadequate Training:** Workers who are not properly trained in the importance of machine guarding may not use or respect the guards, increasing the likelihood of unsafe practices and accidents.
7. **Inadequate Guarding for Specific Tasks:** Some tasks require guarding that is correctly used.

STATS

- (OSHA) cites machine guarding violations as one of the top 10 most frequently violated standards across all industries. In 2019, there were over 2,000 violations cited under the machine guarding standard.
- It’s estimated that 18,000 injuries and 800 deaths occur annually due to inadequate machine guarding in the U.S.
- In Ontario, Canada, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) reported that machine-related injuries are among the leading causes of workplace injuries in sectors involving heavy equipment.

- The landscaping industry is known for its high injury rates. Between 2001 and 2017, of the 18,037 workers’ compensation claims analyzed, 3,311 were classified as serious injuries. The percentage of serious injuries increased from 16% to 21% during this period.
- While specific statistics for landscaping are not detailed, machine-related injuries across industries can include amputations, lacerations, and crush injuries. These injuries often occur when machinery is not properly guarded.