Machine Guards Defend Safety



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WHAT'S AT STAKE
Moving machinery is everywhere. Even something as innocent as a photocopier contains moving parts. Tangling with moving machinery can cause horrendous injuries or death.

WHAT'S THE DANGER
If it swings, spins, revolves, slides, opens, closes or moves in any way at all, it can hurt or kill you. Limbs, fingers, ears and even faces can be ripped off if caught in belts, rollers or chains. People can be dragged into augers or crushed to death before they can even cry out. Open machinery may fling work pieces or debris back out, causing deadly injuries. Cutting, pressing or grinding surfaces can scar you for life.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF
Identify the hazard: A good rule of thumb is "If it moves, guard it." Take some time and work with your crew and supervisor to conduct a job hazard analysis and identify danger points. You'll need more than one set of eyes to spot them all.

Places where machine guards are often needed:

- **Power transmission points:** Shafts, pulleys, belts and chains
- **Moving parts:** Cranks, connecting rods and gear trains
- **Operation point:** The part of the machine that does the work: Jaws, blades and clamps

If a moving part or point cannot be guarded or screened, take steps to keep people away. "Electric eye" barriers that shut down the machine are one way. Physical barricades, netting or a simple chain barrier may be appropriate, too.

Ensure that all machinery is working properly, and never "work around" or take off guards. They're there for YOU. If a safety system is malfunctioning or

slowing things down too much, get it fixed!

Make sure the emergency stop button is within easy reach of machine operators and ensure everyone knows where it is. Review lockout procedures, too.

FINAL WORD
Be alert to your surroundings and of how close you are to moving machinery. Staying clear of a pinchpoint, driveshaft or set of rollers may save your life, too.