Machine Guards Defend Safety

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.

QUIZ

1. In general, anything that moves should have a guard between it and the worker.
   - True
   - False

2. What should you not wear around moving machine parts?
   a. Tight-fitting gloves
   b. Hardhat c. Well-fitted reflective vest
   c. Scarf

3. If a moving part cannot be guarded, barricades may be installed to keep people away.
   - True
   - False

4. If a machine guard is slowing you down, you should remove it, as long as you remember to put it back on afterward.
   - True
   - False

5. One of the easiest ways to stay safe around machinery is to be alert and aware of your surroundings.
   - True
   - False

BEFORE THE TALK - TIPS

1. Before the talk, look around your workplace. Do you see any unguarded danger points? Are there any guards that have been removed or damaged?
2. Have your workers look each other over for loose hair, worn or tattered clothing, shirts that aren't tucked in or floppy sleeves/trouser legs. Check for untied laces too!
3. Check up on safety signals. Does your workplace have a signal for "Stop work and turn off machinery immediately?" How is it conveyed - will everyone see or hear it?
4. Use this time to review lockout/tagout policies and procedures too.
5. Housekeeping is an important part of machine guarding. If someone slips he may reach out and grab a moving part to recover his balance.
6. Guards are used on hand tools too. Hand grinders are a common place for tampered guards. Are all workplace tool guards in place?
7. Describe and demonstrate personal protective equipment to be used around machinery. Examples might include well-fitting gloves, safety footwear and hairnets.

AFTER THE TALK- *CHECKLIST*

PROVIDED FOLLOW-UP TO WORKERS THAT DID

POORLY ON THE QUIZ
NAME: _____
_____
DATE: _____

OBSERVED WORKERS
TASK(S): _____
_____
DATE: _____

REFRESHER TRAINING
TOPIC(S): _____
_____
DATE: _____

OTHER (DESCRIBE): _____
MEETING DATE: _____
LOCATION: _____

NOTES

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ANSWERS:

1. True
2. D
3. True
4. False
5. True

ATTENDANCE

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

INSTRUCTOR: _____ **DATE:** _____

SAFETY TALK: _____