Guard Against Machine Injuries Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Large guards manufactured from steel can become very heavy. An alternate material should be considered. Thermoformed plastic machine guards almost always weigh a fraction of metal guards, greatly reducing the number of injuries from handling the guard.
2. Consulting with a specialist on machine guarding is a helpful way to make sure your equipment guarding is properly sized. Many guarding manufacturers can complete surveys, make suggestions, and also provide a properly fitting guard.
3. Using a back plate completely encloses moving components and can prevent reaching around or past the guard. A back plate can prevent fingers, loose clothing, hair, etc. from entering the guarded area. It may be necessary to design a point guard system to allow normal maintenance procedures, such as checking oil and hydraulic fluids, to be performed safely around moving equipment.
4. Any guard that does not conform to the current ANSI B11.19-2010 standards needs to be updated immediately. Discuss the specific application with a guarding specialist to ensure that any guard does not add additional hazards to the location.
5. A properly installed guard is not a safety issue. Guards should be installed in a fashion so that unintentional removal is not possible.
6. Employees should also be reminded during safety meetings regarding the proper installation and care for equipment guarding. Guards are meant to protect the employees from the moving components, and are not to be used as steps under any circumstances.

STATS

- 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, abrasions, and over 800 deaths per year.
- A newly released study from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found that more than 34,000 people sustain a lost-time injury in the workplace annually due to machine accidents. Additionally, the Occupational Safety & Health Association (OSHA) included the lack of machine safeguarding in its “Top Ten List” of frequently cited employee safety violations of 2019, with 1,743 violations issued.
- Each year approximately 700 workers are killed from coming in contact with

objects and equipment and approximately 5,000 workers sustain an injury that results in amputation.

- Each year, workers suffer approximately 125,000 caught or crush injuries that occur when body parts get caught between two objects or entangled with machinery. These hazards are also referred to as “pinch points.” The physical forces applied to a body part caught in a pinch point can vary and cause injuries ranging from bruises, cuts, and scalping to mangled and amputated body parts, and even death.