Seven Statistics on Machine Guarding



One of the worst types of injury to experience or witness in a workplace is amputation of a worker’s limb as a result of unintended contact with unguarded machinery. Here are seven statistics related to machine guarding.

1. Nearly 50 percent of work-related amputations occur in manufacturing plants. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration)
2. Six injuries associated with moving machine parts are bruising, lacerations, amputations, crushed or broken bones, burns, and electrical shocks.
3. Three things that can lead to worker entanglement with machinery are loose clothing, long hair and jewelry.
4. Four types of machine guards are: fixed (permanently attached to machinery); interlocked (guards which, when opened or removed, automatically stop machine operation); adjustable (to handle different material sizes) and self-adjusting (which open only enough to let material in while keeping the rest of the point of operation, such as a rotating saw blade, covered).
5. About 20 percent of worker fatalities in the United States are caused by contact with equipment or entanglement in running machinery. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
6. Three types of dangerous moving parts requiring guarding are points of operation (the point where the machine performs work such as cutting, shaping, or drilling); power transmission components (such as flywheels, pulleys, shafts or chains); and other parts which are in motion when a machine is operating.
7. Four safety tips surrounding machinery are: never operate machinery before checking that guards are in place and functioning correctly; encourage workers to report defective or missing guards to a supervisor or manager immediately; never make adjustments to machinery unless you are qualified to do so; and have an authorized person shut down/release all forms of hazardous energy and lock out machinery before performing repairs or maintenance.

One of the most severe types of injury occurring in the workplace is amputation, which often causes permanent disability. A lack of machine guarding or insufficient guarding is a major cause of these traumatic injuries. Here are seven statistics related to machine guarding: