

Overview

Machine guards are your first line of defense against injuries caused by machine operation. Each machine must have adequate safeguards to protect operators from the machine's hazards.

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Having an understanding of how a machine works, and how the guards can protect you, will result in a reduced risk of injury.

All guards must:

- prevent contact;
- be secured in place or otherwise be tamper proof;
- create no new hazard;
- allow for lubrication with the guard still in place;
- not interfere with the machine operation.

Types of safeguarding

Several types of safeguarding include:

- guards — fixed, interlocking, adjustable, or self-adjusting.
- devices — sensing, pullback, restraint, operational controls, or gates.
- location or distance — locating the machine so that hazardous areas are not normally accessible.
- automated feeding and ejection methods — eliminate operator exposure to the hazards.
- miscellaneous aids — shields, feeding-tools, holding devices, or awareness barriers.

What must I do?

You should always report missing, damaged, or inoperative guards. It is not safe to operate machinery without properly working guards.

If the guard is damaged or becomes inoperative while you are working, shut the machine down, and have the guard inspected by a qualified person. The guard may need to be repaired or replaced before work can safely proceed.

If unexpected machine start-up could cause injury, use the lockout/tagout program.

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