Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting

Apollo
— MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS —
Building People Who Build Great Things

Home Healthy - Home Safe
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Machine Guarding

Workers who operate and maintain machinery suffer approximately 18,000 injuries and over 800 deaths per year.
Machine safeguards are your first line of defense against injuries caused by moving machines.
So what are machine guards?
Machine guarding is a precautionary safety feature on manufacturing or other engineering equipment. Specifically, it is a shield or device covering hazardous areas of a machine to prevent contact with body parts or to control hazards like chips and noise from exiting the machine.
In order for machine guards to be effective, they 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

Here are the four most common types of machine guards:

- Fixed guards: Fixed guards are a permanent part of the machine
- Interlocking guards: Interlocking guards can be opened or removed. When they are, the power automatically shuts off, the moving parts of the machine are stopped, and the machine cannot be started until the guard is back in place.
- Adjustable guards: Allow flexibility in accommodating various sizes of material while still protecting the point of operation. These guards must be adjusted manually.
- Self-adjusting guards: Self-adjusting guards are barriers determined by the movement of the material. As the operator moves the material into the danger area, the guard is pushed away, providing an opening which is only large enough to admit the material.

Modern machines save workers time and are essential for some careers in today's workplace. Take the precautionary steps to be safe and keep workers out of harm's way.

HEALTHY OR SAFETY REMINDER: Don't take unnecessary risks at work. It's never worth it.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. **Why is guarding important?**
2. **Should you operate a tool without a guard if the tool came with one?**