

# **Machine Guards**

## **A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS**

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

### **DURING THE MEETING**

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

## **Machine Guards**

Today most machines at worksites are equipped with guards. In the past decade, guarding has improved dramatically. Because of this, fewer employees are sustaining the crushing injuries that used to occur all too frequently.

Guards are installed to protect operators and others in the area from injury.

Yet some operators continually find ways of putting themselves in danger by removing machine guards or tampering with interlocks so they can operate the machines faster.

### **Note to Discussion Leader:**

At this time mention the guards on the various pieces of equipment in your area and describe how they protect employees from injuries. (Example: The V-belt drive guards, barrier guards, motor-coupling guards, two-hand control devices and electric-eye beams.)

Often it is necessary to remove a guard to service or adjust a machine, a tool or a piece of equipment. When doing this, be sure the power is turned off and the switch is locked out or tagged out. When the service job is completed, make sure the guard is replaced securely and is working properly.

Breakdowns, jammed work and broken parts sometimes cause us to forget ordinary safety procedures. Very often, to remedy these conditions it is necessary to get into out-of-the-way places. Extreme caution is needed, because in some cases the location of the trouble cannot be guarded. So be sure that basic and added precautions are taken to avoid any movement of the parts.

### **To prevent accidents, be careful around:**

- Meshing gears
- In-running rollers
- Reciprocating parts
- Chain and sprocket drives
- Cams and rollers
- Belts and pulleys
- Flywheels

- Cutting or abrasive surfaces
- Cooling fans
- Conveyor equipment
- Rotating couplings and shafts
- Hot or overheated parts
- Warm gears

Other hazards may exist, depending on the type of operation. For the well-being of everyone, see that guards replaced properly. If you see piece of equipment without a guard, or any other unsafe condition, report it to your supervisor immediately, whether the equipment is in your work area or elsewhere.

Remember, it pays to double-check guards. You could save a hand, an arm or a life.

Guards are there to prevent injuries. Don't tamper with them. Let them do their job--protecting you from injury.

**Note to Discussion Leader:**

If an injury has occurred recently because someone operated a piece of machinery without a guard or because someone tampered with the safety controls, describe the circumstances and details of the accident, but do not attempt to embarrass the employee who was injured. No one likes to suffer embarrassment in front of others.