

# SAFETY ALERT

## Proper Machine Safeguarding

Machine safeguarding is the primary means of preventing employees from becoming exposed to hazardous movement of equipment. Work-place practices, employee training and administrative controls play an equally important role in preventing injuries. But, the key is to provide a physical restraint that will keep employees from unintentionally coming into contact with the hazardous movement.

OSHA requires adequate safeguards for machines and equipment generating hazardous mechanical movement. Failure to provide these safeguards may result in serious injury or death and/or regulatory compliance citations and penalties.

### Common types of Guards are:

- Fixed – A barrier that does not allow the employee to reach the hazard or the hazard to reach the employee.
- Adjustable – Barrier that can be adjusted to accommodate differences in production and machine setup. A disadvantage with these types of guards is that the operator can adjust them out of compliance.
- Self-Adjusting – Barrier that moves and adjusts to the product and setup. A disadvantage is that they require frequent maintenance.
- Interlocking – Shuts off or disengages power and prevents start up when the guard is open. These open guards may not be used as energy isolation methods for lock-out/tag-out (LOTO).

### TRAINING

All employees must be trained in the following with regards to machine guarding:

- Machine specific hazards.
- Safe work practices and procedures.
- The purpose and proper use of the equipment safe guards.
- Responding to broken, removed, or misadjusted guards.
- LOTO procedures when guards are to be removed.

### MANAGEMENT

Managers must review equipment for proper guards and periodically inspect employee performance during setup and other hazardous tasks to ensure guarding compliance and adequacy.

In general all moving parts on all equipment must be protected by guarding the point of operation. Surround the moving part with a barrier, or install an area guard that prevents employees from gaining access to the equipment. Warning signs that persuade the employee not to enter are not compliant.