

Toolbox Talk

Preventing Caught or Crushed Injuries

Overview

Each year, workers suffer approximately 125,000 caught or crushed by injuries that occur when body parts get caught between two objects or entangled with machinery. These hazards are also referred to as “pinch points or nip points.” The physical forces applied to a body part caught in a pinch point can vary and cause injuries ranging from bruises, cuts, and scalping to mangled and amputated body parts, and even death.

Prevention

To avoid these types of injuries dress appropriately for work with pants and sleeves that are not too long or too loose. Shirts should be fitted or tucked in. Avoid wearing loose and dangling jewelry. Tie back long hair and tuck braids and ponytails behind you or into your clothing. Wear the appropriate, well-fitting gloves for your job.

Look for possible pinch points before you start a task. Take the time to plan out your actions and decide on the necessary steps to work safely. Give your work your full attention. Don't joke around, daydream, or try to multi-task on the job – most accidents occur when workers are distracted. Read and follow warning signs posted on equipment.

Machinery can pose a hazard with moving parts, conveyors, rollers and rotating shafts. NEVER reach into a moving machine. Properly maintain and always use the machine and tool guards provided with your equipment; they act as barriers between the moving parts and your body. Don't reach around, under or through a guard and always report missing or broken barriers to your supervisor. Turn equipment off and use lockout/tagout procedures before adjusting, clearing a jam, repairing, or servicing a machine.

Caught/crush hazards are not limited to machinery. Vehicles, powered doors, and forklifts can pose a crush hazard unless they have been blocked or tagged out. Never place your body under or between powered equipment unless it is de-energized. Doors, file drawers, and heavy crates can pinch fingers and toes. Take care where you place your fingers. Test the weight before lifting, carrying, and placing boxes; an awkward or heavy load can slip and pinch your hands or feet. Get help or use tools to move large and/or heavy items.