

A pinch point is produced when 2 objects come together and there is a possibility that a person could be caught or injured when coming in contact with that area. Pinch points commonly impact fingers/hands but can impact any area of the body. The injury resulting from a pinch point could be as minor as a blister or as severe as an amputation or death. Conveyors, gears, loaders, compactors, and other moving equipment are examples of machinery with pinch points.

Common Causes of Injuries from Pinch Points

- Not paying attention to the location of hands and feet
- Walking or working in areas with mobile equipment and fixed structures.
- Loose clothing, hair or jewelry getting caught in rotating parts or equipment.
- Poor condition of equipment and guarding
- Dropping or carelessly handling materials or suspended loads
- Not using the proper work procedures or tools
- Reaching into moving equipment and machinery



Safety Controls for Pinch Points

- Machine guarding: Verify all guarding is in place and effective.
- Personal Protective Equipment: Heavy-duty leather gloves, metacarpal guards, forearm guards, etc. Note: Do not wear gloves around rotating equipment
- Pre-work inspection: Identify potential pinch points before starting work.
- Stay in employee designated areas: Always make sure mobile equipment operators know your location.
- Lockout/ Tag out: Always make sure mobile equipment is de-energized before starting any maintenance work.
- Alertness: Drowsiness leads to inattentive work habits and shortcuts
- Operating manuals and work procedures: Always review these before starting work; pinch points may also be identified in these documents.

Questions to Generate Discussion:

- What are the most common sources of pinch points in your work area?
- What improvements can be made to machine guarding?

Are all pinch points correctly guarded? If not, they must be guarded – or- access restricted to the area until they are guarded.

