



A Pinch of Prevention

When we talk about pinch points, we are not talking about something like a pinch on the cheek from your grandmother. We are talking about some part of your body getting caught in or between two objects where it can be pinched, crushed, or even amputated. Pinch points are all around us in our daily work here, from office to maintenance operations. Pinch point injuries can be anything from a minor cut from closing a desk drawer on your finger to a life ending injury from being crushed between a wall and a forklift.

A pinch point is a place where a body part, usually hands or fingers, can be caught in or between such as:

- Between moving machine parts
- Between heavy crates, equipment or drums while moving them
- A doorway either on a building or a vehicle
- Between moving parts of a power tool
- Between sliding parts or hinges on equipment
- Between the lid and a container when closing it

Guards on tools and machinery are in place to prevent pinch point injuries. Never remove or disable a machine guard or use a machine that has a missing or disabled guard. Never reach around, under, or through a guard and always report any guards that are missing or not working properly.

A machine that starts up or moves accidentally can trap a hand or other body part in a pinch point. Keep your hands away from moving parts whenever possible. If you need to put your hands near pinch points to repair, service, clear, or adjust equipment, make sure you turn off the machine and lock out the energy controls first.

Look for possible pinch points before starting any job. Check the equipment you're about to use to see where a body part could get caught; then plan your work to avoid those areas.

Give even the smallest task your full attention and don't take any short cuts. Pinch point injuries usually occur when you are distracted or trying to hurry the job to get done faster. Take your time and do not get pinched.

