

10 Rules for Working Safely Around Machines

Industrial, manufacturing and construction worksites have plenty of machines. Machines are used for everything from power generation to the sorting of recyclables, and they're an integral part of assembly lines all over the world.

A number of safety hazards come with working around machinery that employers, safety managers and workers all need to be aware of. By preparing for these dangers, accidents and injuries can be prevented.



1 Don't reach into the machine!

Perhaps this first rule is the most obvious, but it's important. Reaching into a machine while it's turned on—even if only for a second to grab something that's gotten stuck in the machine—can result in serious injury.



2

Use Proper Lockout/Tagout Procedures

When a worker does need to reach into a machine (to move something that's gotten stuck, for doing maintenance or cleaning) use lockout/tagout procedures for isolating energy sources.



2

Use Proper Lockout/Tagout Procedures (cont.)

Employees doing repair work should each have a lock.

Employers and safety managers should make sure clear lockout/tagout procedures exist for each machine and that all employees have received adequate training.

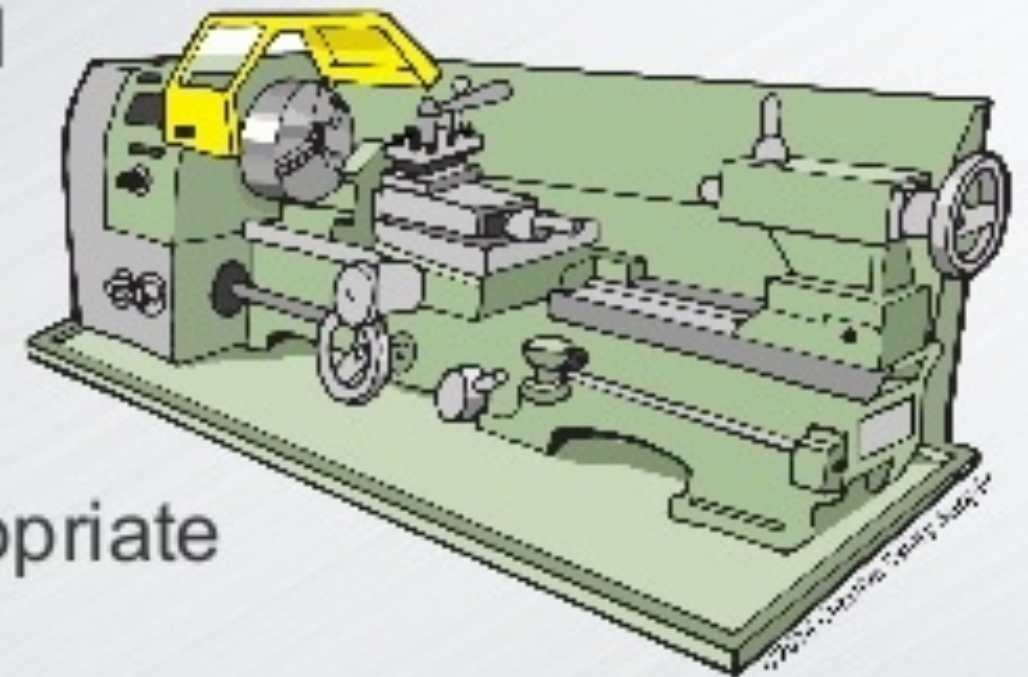


3

Stay Clear of Sharp or Moving Parts

Many machines have guards around dangerous parts to keep employees safe, but workers should still use caution in these areas.

Safety managers should consider adding machine guards where appropriate to prevent accidents.

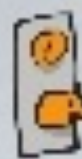


4

Watch Out for Cords and Wires

Loose cords and wires can cause tripping hazards and even electrical hazards.

Try to avoid using extension cords for prolonged periods of time.



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Watch where you're walking when cords are present.

4

Watch Out for Cords and Wires (cont.)

If a cord or wire will cross a pathway, safety managers can mark it with hazard tape.

When cords need to be present for the long-term, consider adjusting the electrical system to make power access for machines easier.



5

Don't Wear Loose Clothing

Loose clothing like untucked T-Shirts, the drawstrings of hooded sweatshirts and unzipped jackets can get drawn into belts, gears, chains, pulleys and other moving parts of machines.

Avoid wearing these items on the job.*

**Employers can institute a dress code if this hazard becomes problematic.*



6

Wear Proper PPE



The kind of personal protective equipment required around a machine will depend on the machine and the task an employee is performing.



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Wear Proper PPE (cont.)

Nevertheless, gloves, hardhats, safety glasses, earplugs and other gear serve as the last line of defense between employees and hazards, so it's important to use them where necessary.

Safety managers can post signs near machines reminding employees to wear PPE.



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Use Caution Around Heat Sources

Some machines get hot while operating and some even contain open flames. Everyone should be aware of these areas and use caution when nearby.

PPE like gloves or flame-resistant clothing may be required in these areas.



8

Be Careful When Cleaning

In addition to using lockout/tagout procedures when cleaning around machines, employees should note other possible hazards, too:

- Combustible dust
- Fire and explosion hazards
- Need for PPE during cleaning (chemicals present)



8

Be Careful When Cleaning (cont.)

If combustible dust is an issue in your facility, employees should follow protocol for removing it from around machines (especially the tops and flat surfaces of machines) as cleaning can disperse the dust into the air and lead to fires and explosions.

Some cleaning chemicals for machines also require the use of PPE.



9

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

Starting up a machine? Cleaning a machine?
Performing maintenance?

Tell others working in the area what
you're doing so everyone stays clear
of hazardous areas. A simple heads
up can prevent accidents.



10 Follow Visual and Written Instructions

Many machines have signs and labels on them alerting employees to hazards and providing instructions.

For example, a label might say PPE is required, an arc flash is possible or the power switch is located in a certain place.



10 Follow Visual and Written Instructions (cont.)

















Everyone should obey these visual cues. They'll keep people safe and answer many questions.

If a facility doesn't already have signs and labels on machines, safety managers can install them to make the workplace safer and more efficient.





- A **hazard** is anything that can hurt or make you ill
- A **workplace hazard** is any condition, practice, or behaviour that could cause injury or illness to a person or damage to property

	MEANING	SHAPE & COLOUR	SYMBOLS are put inside the safety shape. These are used in all EEC Countries		
PROHIBITION	You must not. Do not do. Stop.	 RED means STOP	 No admittance	 No smoking	 No dirty clothes
MANDATORY	You must do. Carry out the action given by the sign.	 BLUE means OBEY	 Keep clear	 Head protection must be worn	 Wear gloves
WARNING	Caution. Risk of danger. Hazard ahead.	 YELLOW means risk of DANGER	 Danger high voltage	 Danger mind your head	 Danger fork lifts in operation
SAFE CONDITION	The safe way. Where to go in an emergency	 GREEN means GO	 First aid station	 Emergency phone	 Emergency exit

MULTI-PURPOSE SIGNS

To be used when the hazard requires more than one of the 4 types to convey the safety message.



Acetylene



Wear masks



Warning
Flammable liquid



Protective garments must be worn

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT

If the safety sign needs additional information it may be added in words.



Fire alarm call point



DANGER
Highly flammable



Protective gloves must be worn



Electrical gloves

FIRE EQUIPMENT SIGNS

For indicating the location of fire fighting equipment and how they should be used.



Fire alarm call point



Fire hose reel



Fire extinguisher



Firephone

WORKS TRAFFIC SIGNS

Are the same design as public road signs.



DANGER IDENTIFICATION MARKING

