



Safety Topic (Pinch Points)

A pinch point is any point at which it is possible for a person or part of a person's body to be caught between a stationary object and moving object or between moving parts or objects. A pinch point not only can cause injury to a limb or body part, but can cause a person to become trapped or pinched between the two objects. An example of a pinch point that everyone can probably relate to is shutting your finger or hand in a door.

Body parts can become caught between moving parts, moving or stationary machine parts, moving parts and materials, between materials or equipment when moving them, slamming fingers or hands in doors, pinching fingers or hand with equipment that has sliding parts or hinges, machines such as presses and rollers, and tools. Pinch points commonly impact the fingers or hands, but can include any area of the body. Injuries resulting from pinch points can be minor, such as contusions or blisters, or more serious, such as amputation or even death.

Common causes of injuries from pinch points include:

- Not keeping your eyes on the task at hand or not paying attention.
- Working or walking in areas with mobile equipment and fixed structures.
- Using tools for purposes other than their intended use.
- Placing body parts into moving equipment or machinery.
- Improper handling of materials or suspended loads.
- Defective equipment or not using guards.
- Loose clothing, hair or jewelry getting caught in rotating parts or equipment.

Protective Measures include:

- Verify all guards are in place and effective.
- Identify all potential pinch points before starting work.
- Always make sure mobile equipment operators know you are in the area. Never put yourself in a position between mobile equipment and a stationary object.
- When performing lockout tag-out verify the equipment is de-energized before starting work.
- Stay alert and keep your eyes on the task you are performing. Always know where your body parts are.
- Review operating manuals and work procedures before starting work. These may identify potential pinch points.
- Heavy duty gloves may help protect against certain types of pinch points.

