

One Safeguard Doesn't Make it Safe Stats and Facts

FACTS

Common injuries from working with and around machinery include crushing, amputations, burns, lacerations and electric shock.

One worker's hand was crushed and another suffered the partial amputation of a finger during a bloody 10-day period in July 2016. The two men, employees at Green Bay muffler component manufacturer Bay Fabrication, suffered severe injuries as they operated machinery without adequate safety guards and procedures in place, according to OSHA investigators.

"The fact that two workers suffered debilitating injuries is tragic. The reality is that the company failed to re-evaluate its machine safety procedures and continued to expose other workers to the same hazards even after these injuries," said Robert Bonack, OSHA's area director in Appleton, Wisc. "Adequate and properly installed machine safety guards and lockout/tag out procedures must be in place to prevent workers from coming in contact with operating parts."

STATS

- 212 was cited for violations 1,743 times in 2019, compared to 1,972 citations in 2018.
- Total penalties in 2019 equaled \$11,335,996. \$11 million may not seem like much when you consider that in 2015 there were 2,644 amputations, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- There was an average of more than 11,000 amputations every year. Many times, the loss of a finger, hand or arm results from machinery operations, and often the lack of proper guarding, or inadequate guarding.
- A lack of machine guarding is consistently on OSHA's Top 10

Most Cited Violations report. In reference to OSHA's CFR 1910.212, there were 1,969 machine guarding violations in 2018 (down slightly from 2,109 violations in 2017), resulting in over \$7M in fines each year. The actual price tag for an injury is much higher than simply the OSHA citation, because indirect costs must be taken into account, such as damaged facilities or equipment, medical expenses, lawsuits, lost productivity and replacement personnel.

- In 2018, 87% of the total number of OSHA machine guarding violations were classified as "Serious," meaning "one in which there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result, and the employer knew or should have known of the hazard." In addition, 1% of the total OSHA machine guarding violations were reported as "Willful," meaning "committed with an intentional disregard of or plain indifference to the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act and requirements."
- It is estimated that less than half the machines in the U.S. are properly guarded, and workers who operate and maintain machinery suffer approximately 18,000 amputations, lacerations, crushing injuries, abrasions and most profoundly, more than 800 deaths per year.