

# Pros and Cons of Safeguards Tool

Use this chart as a quick reference on the pros and cons (limitations) for common machine safeguards.

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## Picture This: Trust Issues – Struck-by/Caught-between

You probably already know that you should never put yourself under a suspended load. Never. It's not safe. There are simply too many things that could go wrong.

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## Crushed-between Scissor Lift and Support Beam

A 27-year-old male employee was fatally injured when he was crushed between the railing of a scissor lift and a mezzanine outer support beam while installing insulation on duct work.

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# Preventing Struck-by and Caught-between Incidents Chart

Use this chart as a reference to help you identify common struck-by/caught-between hazards and ways to protect your workers against them and in some cases, eliminate the hazard altogether.

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## By the Numbers: Struck-by Injuries

More than 800 U.S. construction workers died in struck-by incidents from 2011 to 2015, which is a rate higher than any other industry.

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## Picture This: Missing Guard Turns Deadly

Rotating parts, moving belts, points of operation, and other similar machine hazards must be guarded to protect workers from injury, amputation, and death.

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# Workplan: Machine Guarding

Here's a look at what machine guards are all about and the key role supervisors play in implementing and enforcing a company's machine guarding program.

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## Workplan: Struck-by and Caught-between

The prevention of struck-by and caught-between related hazards and injuries is a primary focus of OHS/OSHA inspectors. Here's how you can help your organization protect workers and keep them safe on the job.

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## 7 Things to Know About Respirator Use

Respirators are a must for work in environments with low oxygen levels or harmful debris, fumes, gases, or vapors. Share these seven tips with your workers.

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# Why We Neglect Lunch Breaks

According to Gallup, only one in three employees are engaged at work. Because engagement impacts productivity, happiness and job satisfaction, it's time employees and employers across North America stepped up to the plate – the lunch plate that is.

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## Focus On: Mental Health

Chances are you, or someone you know, has been touched by mental illness. For some, a mental illness is a temporary state caused by a specific stressful, traumatic or sad event, such as the death of a parent, job loss, or even a seemingly happy event, like a birthday or sending a child off to college. For others, mental illness is something they deal with throughout their life.

In the last few years there have been several celebrity suicides and other famous or influential people who have come forward to speak about their struggles with mental illness. Of course, their struggles are no different or worthier of paying attention to than anyone else's, but this has opened the door for many to feel more comfortable talking about their own mental health experiences, seeking help, and reaching out to help others.

The information that follows has been gathered from several different sources with the hope that it helps you better understand mental health issues, identify behaviors in your employees that could signal they are dealing with a mental illness, and ways to reach out and help them.

### What You Need to Know

Mental health includes a person's [emotional, psychological and social well-being](#). It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make

choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Research shows that many mental illnesses are caused by a combination of the following three [factors](#):

1. Biological – genetics, infections, brain injury
2. Psychological – emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, neglect
3. Environmental – loss of a loved one, divorce, low self-esteem, anxiety, social expectations

Contrary to popular belief, [springtime](#) is the time of the year when people are most likely to commit suicide – and not the holidays. Researchers aren't sure exactly why suicide spikes in the spring. "It's still rather a mystery," says Christine Moutier, MD, chief medical officer at the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Seasons with less sunlight are more challenging for people with mood disorders, particularly seasonal affective disorder, but the statistics on suicide rates stand opposite of that fact.

## **Know the Signs**

There are often [clues](#) that someone is experiencing mental health problems. Here are 6 of them.

1. Work performance has declined without a clear reason. A once very driven employee suddenly fails to hit his or her goals, frequently calls in sick, or shows up late.
2. Their mind seems to be on other things or they are distant and not fully engaged in what's going on around them. This could mean missing deadlines or not contributing as much as they used to in meetings.
3. They seem very anxious and can't seem to relax or focus on their work.
4. They're negative or apathetic about work or life in general.
5. They get mad or lash out for no apparent reason.
6. They are taking risks or being careless when it comes to their safety. You might even suspect they have a drug or

alcohol problem.

## **What You Can Do**

If you are concerned about an employee's well-being, talk to them in a private place and express your concern and offer help in the form of referring them to your organization's Employee Assistance Program or temporary leave options offered. Talk to them about their workload and schedule – maybe a change in their schedule would help them get through a rough time, or maybe they need some time to attend therapy sessions or doctor appointments.

If you aren't sure what to do or you aren't comfortable talking to them, talk to your human resource person and ask them to reach out to the employee.

You can also mental health information with your employees in general such as these [seven](#) ways to help maintain positive mental health:

1. Get professional help if you need it
2. Connect with others
3. Stay positive
4. Get physically active
5. Help others
6. Get enough sleep
7. Practice and develop coping skills

Realize though that it can be hard to do these things when you are depressed, have anxiety, or other mental health issues, but even incorporating a few of these tips can make a difference.

Help is available in many different forms, from different people, and in different places. If a worker is dealing with mental illness, be supportive and don't be afraid to [reach out](#) to someone who you think is struggling – you can make a difference.

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# Worker Killed after Entanglement with Rotating Shaft

Remind workers of ways to prevent these types of injuries and deaths:

Service equipment following manufacturer's instructions.

Only use equipment when manufacturer's guards or an adequate replacement guard is in place and operational.

Inspect all safety guards before operating equipment.

Never remove machine guards while equipment is energized or can potentially become energized.

Never alter machine guards without manufacturer's approval. De-energize and lock-out equipment's energy before removing guard to service equipment and always replace guards after servicing equipment. Don't wear loose clothing or jewelry and keep hair tight.

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## Beat the Heat! Top 5 Summer Hazards

**Beat the Heat!**

**TOP 5 SUMMER HAZARDS**



When summertime rolls around, it's easy to forget that even the clearest weather and sunshine can create hazards when working outdoors. If you find yourself working alone outside, you'll need to take extra precautions as any potential problems are made worse when you're away from help. In this list we'll be looking at some of the most common risks of working outdoors in the summer, and some of the ways that you can help protect yourself.

## 1. **SUN AND HEAT**

Risks from sun and heat include sun stroke, dehydration, and sun burns. To avoid burning, apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before exposure, and reapply throughout the day to maintain your protection. When heat poses a danger to you, make sure that you stay hydrated, and take breaks in the shade whenever possible.

## 2. **POOR AIR QUALITY**

During the summer, air quality can be decreased by environmental factors like allergens, dust, and debris. It's especially important to consider air quality if you already suffer from a respiratory condition such as asthma. To avoid poor air quality in the summer, try to plan any trips outdoors for the coolest, driest times of the day, typically the morning or evening.

## 3. **EXTREME WEATHER**

Just like the winter, summer has its own extreme weather conditions, including lightning strikes and tornadoes. If you're outdoors and you hear thunder, take shelter indoors or inside a car if possible. Lightning is more likely to strike tall objects, so when a structure isn't available it's recommended to take shelter in low, dry areas. To avoid lightning storms, keep an eye on the clouds and always check weather forecasts before you leave.

## 4. **INSECT BITES**

For some people, severe allergic reactions can occur from insect bites, so having an EpiPen available when working outdoors is a good idea. To help you avoid mosquito and insect bites that can cause skin irritation and possibly disease, bring mosquito and insect repellents. Some repellents can cause their own irritations, so make sure to always follow the label directions before applying.

## 5. **IRRITATING PLANTS**

If you might encounter poison ivy and other irritating plants like poison oak, the best preventative measure is to learn to identify these plants and avoid them. If avoiding areas with these plants isn't possible, closed-toe shoes, long sleeves, pants, and gloves can all protect your skin from these plant's oils. If your clothing does come into contact with these plants, wash the clothing thoroughly to avoid second-hand reactions.

## **Conclusion**

Working outdoors at any time presents new challenges and hazards, so take the time to consider the environment around you this summer. Working alone increases the danger from any environmental risk factor, so be sure that if you're working alone this summer, you're following good safety practices.



Written by Zachary O'Dell – SafetyLine

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# Safety Underground

Increasingly, utilities are installing much of their services underground.

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## Avoiding Struck-By Incidents

Struck-by incidents contributed to almost 1,000 construction worker fatalities in the last 5 years according to a new report from the Center for Construction Research and Training.

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## Avoiding Caught-In/Caught-Between Incidents

Caught-in and caught-between hazards account for:

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## Safe Respirator Use

If a respirator is required for a job you're doing it means there is a risk of inhaling contaminants such as harmful dust or gas.

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# **Workplan – Sexual Harassment and Your Responsibilities for Preventing It**

From a moral and legal standpoint, it is simply unacceptable to ignore the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace.

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## **CEO Briefing: How Work-Related Stress Hurts the Bottom Line**

Work-related stress has been around for as long as workplaces themselves. But recognition of stress as an occupational hazard is a product of modern times. Unfortunately, not all CEOs have gotten the message. As a safety director, you must persuade your CEO that stress really is a problem to take seriously.

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## **OSHA Reporting Reminder: Injury and Illness Reporting Reminder**

Specific Employers Required to Submit 2017 Injury and Illness Data by July 1

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# **Tool – Know the Signs of Opioid Overdose**

Death from an opioid overdose happens when too much of the drug overwhelms the brain and interrupts the body's natural drive to breathe.

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# **Checklist for Anti-Harassment Policy**

An anti-harassment policy is a key component of a complete harassment prevention effort.

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# **Workplan – Opioids in the Workplace**

Prescription painkiller abuse costs employers over \$40 billion annually because employees are less productive while at work or are not at work at all.

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# Harassment Leads to Suicide

Studies show that workplace harassment (sexual harassment, bullying, and other forms of harassment) can have emotional and physical effects on a victim and can cause depression, anxiety, and in some cases lead to self-harm and even suicide.

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## Could This Have Been You? How I Got Hooked

Thankfully, this article doesn't end with a death, but it certainly carries an important lesson and personal story of opioid addiction.

Anonymous former opioid user in upstate New York

"I never woke up one day and decided that I wanted to become a drug addict.

I was in college and working full-time when I stepped on an earring in my apartment. The earring pierced my left heel, and days later an abscess formed. With fevers above 102.5 F for several days, I went to the ER for treatment.

I got IV antibiotics and hydrocodone. The infection cleared, and the pain ceased. I took the extra hydrocodone anyways. It made me feel happy and dulled the stress of work and school. I started buying OxyContin from someone with a prescription.

Once the makers of OxyContin revealed the abuse-proof formula, the doctor started to prescribe morphine (much cheaper). So, I bought morphine. First, I thought it was okay as long as I only used on my days off. I graduated

college, so things weren't too bad...right? Pretty soon I told myself I was okay as long as I only used after work. Then it was okay as long as I only used on my break.

My addiction progressed to using all day every day. I couldn't stop. I couldn't support my habit anymore and lived with a constant struggle of trying to find more. Then, I found out I was pregnant. He saved my life.

I finally got help. I have a 6-month-old son, a loving fiancé, a supportive family. I have 14 months in recovery. I am not a junkie. I am someone's daughter, mother, sister, and friend. For me, it started with a snap decision to take a pill just for fun. That decision nearly destroyed me.

Source: Fontline.org

