

SURVIVAL TIPS

Suggestions to keep you healthy and free of injury

Operating machinery

As an operator of a manufacturing or processing machine you may face many hazards, including being:

- caught in shearing and cutting actions;
- entangled in moving parts;
- trapped by an in-running nip;
- struck by moving parts;
- exposed to flying particles;
- crushed;
- trapped in pressing and forming actions;
- struck by drilling actions.

Your machine must be guarded to prevent any part of your body gaining access to those high-hazard areas while the machine is in turned on or in motion.

High-hazard areas of your machine that have to be reached for setting-up, maintenance or clearing a blockage must be shut off from electricity and all other sources of energy, and then locked out or tagged out before guards are removed to gain access.

Tip 1: Check all danger points are guarded.

Do this before you start work each shift - just in case someone has removed a guard without telling you. Also, take another look at that list of consequences above: are you sure *all* danger points are covered by fixed or inter-locked guards?

Tip 2: Know where the emergency stops are located.

Learn this so well that you

can reach them with your eyes shut.

Tip 3: Clear a blockage using the standard procedure.

Don't try to clear a blockage with your hands. Use the standard isolation and lock-out/tagout procedure to shut down the machine and isolate electrical and other energy sources. If there is no standard procedure, ask your supervisor to prepare one.

Tip 4: Remember to check for stored energy.

When isolating your machine's motive power - electricity, air, hydraulics - remember that some machinery can store energy in mechanical, thermal, gravitational or chemical form even after it is "turned off". This stored energy can hurt you. Check!

Tip 5: Test the energy isolation procedure has worked.

Try to operate the machine for another cycle. Make sure nothing happens.

Tip 6: Lock or tag out before putting your body on the line.

Lock out or tag the power-on controls before you start fiddling with the dangerous parts of your machine.

Tip 7: Place tags as close as possible to the switch.

Locks are better than tags,

but if the isolation device can't be locked out, then place your tag as close as possible to the switch point.

Tip 8: Check for other people before restarting.

Don't try restarting your machine until you've checked no one else involved in the setting-up, maintenance or jam-clearing operation has finished and is well clear.

Tip 9: Never remove someone else's locks or tags.

Unless specifically authorised by your supervisor, never bypass or remove locks and tags placed by someone else.

Tip 10: If your machine jams frequently, tell your supervisor.

Blockages are dangerous and reduce production. Your boss needs to know about them to have worn parts replaced and maybe redesign the machine or the process.

Disclaimer: these survival tips are general in nature and are not intended to be comprehensive. Always take into account your own particular circumstances. If you have any questions, please discuss them with your supervisor.

This issue's survival tips supplied by Auckland-based consultancy TQM Safety Ltd.