

## Pinch Points and Hand Injury Prevention

Our hands are essential for nearly every task we perform, making them highly vulnerable to workplace injuries. In the United States, **hand injuries are the second most common workplace injury**, with **crushed-by incidents** being a major cause. One of the primary hazards leading to these injuries is **pinch points**.



### What Are Pinch Points?

A **pinch point** is any location where a body part can get caught between a **moving object and a stationary surface**. These hazards are present in many workplace activities, such as:

- Equipment maintenance
- Lifting and handling materials
- Assembly line work
- Attaching trailers

### How to Prevent Pinch Point Injuries

#### 1. Use Proper Safeguards

- Ensure **machine guards** are in place to eliminate exposure to pinch points.
- **Lock out and tag out (LOTO)** equipment before maintenance to prevent unexpected movement.
- Secure or block machinery parts to prevent stored energy from being released.

#### 2. Maintain Awareness

- Always be aware of **where your hands are** when working near moving parts.
- Avoid placing your hands in **blind spots** where you cannot see them.
- Stay **out of the line of fire** when working near equipment or heavy objects.

#### 3. Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Wear the **appropriate gloves** for the task to reduce the severity of potential injuries.
- Ensuring gloves fit properly ill-fitting gloves can create additional hazards.

#### 4. Communicate with Co-Workers

- **Signal intentions** before moving equipment or materials.
- Confirm that **everyone is clear of danger zones** before starting machinery.

## **Key Takeaway: Stay Vigilant to Prevent Hand Injuries**

Pinch point injuries don't always come from obvious hazards like conveyor belts or large machinery—even closing a truck door carelessly can cause serious harm. Avoid complacency, remain mindful of where your hands are, and take proactive steps to prevent injuries. A moment of awareness can prevent a lifetime of consequences.

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