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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices!®

March 5, 2018

SCI Safety Tip: Beware of pinch points

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The term “pinch point” sounds unpleasant – and it is.

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 moving parts of a machine, or between the moving and stationary parts of a machine, or between material and any part of the machine,” states the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

MIOSHA notes that pinch points can be “quite pervasive” at work, and can occur with a number of machines and devices, including power presses, conveyors, robotic machines, metal-forming machines, powered rollers, assembling machines, plastic molding machinery, printing presses, power transmission equipment, powered doors, covers and hatches.

Avoiding pinch points

To help keep workers safe from experiencing pinch-point injuries, employers should carefully evaluate all machines and equipment to identify pinch-point hazards. “After identifying them, the next step is to eliminate or guard the pinch points to prevent employee contact with the pinch points,” MIOSHA states.

SCI Safety Slogan



James Lehrke - SCI



Guards can help prevent workers from reaching into, through, over, under or around the pinch point. Once any necessary guards are in place, employers must train employees on what the guards are intended to do and the reason the machines need them.

Employers also should instruct workers not to tamper, modify, circumvent or remove the guards. Only trained and qualified workers should alter a machine guard, and only under specific repair work cases.

Any unguarded pinch point found by a worker should be reported to a supervisor immediately.



SCI OSHA News: Industry reps call for OSHA compliance assistance during House hearing

Source: <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com>

By Matt L. 2018

Washington — OSHA should work more as an “assister” than an enforcer. The agency should write standards in easy-to-grasp language, accompanied by fact sheets and other guidance materials. OSHA’s website should become more user-friendly, and the agency needs more consistency in enforcing its current standards.

These suggestions were among those made by a panel of industry representatives during a [Feb. 27 hearing](#) before the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections. The panelists:

- J. Gary Hill, representing the National Association of Home Builders
- Eric Hobbs, a labor and employment attorney representing the U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Peter Gerstenberger, senior advisor for safety, standards and compliance with the Tree Care Industry Association
- David Michaels, former OSHA administrator



In his opening statement, Hill pointed to OSHA’s collaboration with NAHB on a [confined spaces fact sheet](#), released in July. He added that the agency should communicate more with small-business owners through avenues such as town halls and listening sessions and via online methods.

Hill also suggested OSHA make “user-friendly improvements” to its website and that agency guidance should be “simple, straightforward and easy to digest.”

Hobbs offered recommendations on improving OSHA’s “attitude and relationships with stakeholders.” He claimed the agency “dismissed legitimate concerns” during some of its rulemaking and further hinders its relationship with employers by issuing press releases after citations.

Hobbs and Hill also reiterated one of the [major talking points of Secretary of Labor R. Alexander Acosta](#): compliance assistance.



4 Healthy Reasons to Take Vacations

Are vacations necessary? A suggestion? An impediment to getting your job done?

If you view vacations as an option that you can skip, then you're pretty typical. The average American employee takes only half of her or his eligible vacation time.

Of those who do go on vacation, more than half – 60 percent – spend some time on the job while vacationing. About a quarter were in touch with a coworker and 20 percent were contacted by their supervisor about work.

Well-Planned Vacations Are Beneficial for Health

1. **Reduce your stress.** A number of scientific studies have been done about vacations. One study found when you're removed from stresses at work; your stress and anxiety levels can drop. The effects last up to five weeks after you're back from vacation.

2. **Boost your heart health.** A study of men at risk for heart disease learned that those who skipped vacations for several years were 30 percent more likely to have a heart attack than those who took at least a week off every year. Skipping just one year's vacation increased the risk for heart disease.

A study of women compared women who took at least two vacations per year to women who took only one vacation every several years. The women who took fewer vacations were about eight times more likely to develop heart disease, have a heart attack or die of a coronary-related problem.

3. **Reduce depression.** A study in rural Wisconsin found that women who vacationed every other year or less were more likely to suffer from depression and higher stress than women who took a couple of vacations each year.

4. **Improve your sleep.** You may have experienced sleeplessness when you're worried about something at work. You may work late into the evening or check your email before bed. These habits can hurt your sleep cycles. Being short on sleep can leave you less alert and focused. Sleep deprivation can impair your memory. It can also increase risks for accidents.

A good vacation can short-circuit these bad work-related sleep habits and get you back to sleeping better.

In its fiscal year 2019 budget proposal, OSHA is seeking a \$5.1 million increase in compliance assistance funding, 24 new compliance assistance specialists and eight staff members for its Voluntary Protection Programs.

In contrast, Michaels, who left his position as OSHA administrator in January 2017, said that although some employers will respond to the "carrot" (compliance assistance) approach, some respond only to the "stick" (enforcement). "Some need a very big stick, and some need no stick at all," Michaels said. "OSHA needs all of those tools. To say to do one and not the other doesn't work."

He said assertions that OSHA does not partner with industries and that it looks to all employers as villainous is "really discrediting the agency and is not based in fact."

On the topic of regulations, Michaels said no empirical evidence exists that regulations kill jobs, but that "powerful evidence" suggests OSHA standards save lives. An estimated 14,000 workers died on the job in 1970, according to the agency; that number was 5,190 in 2016.

"OSHA standards don't kill jobs," Michaels said. "They stop jobs from killing workers."

Hobbs acknowledged the need for enforcement but said consistency is an issue, partly attributable to the retirement of experienced OSHA inspectors and the hiring of new ones.

"The standards themselves, and even the compliance guidance, are so complicated [OSHA inspectors] don't understand the standards," he said.

He added, "In fact, I've run into area directors who do not understand the standards," and highlighted inconsistencies from those directors on lockout/tagout inspections.

Whether the suggestions presented during the hearing will be considered is unclear, as at press time OSHA was without a permanent leader. Scott Mugno's nomination as assistant secretary of labor initially was sent to the Senate on Dec. 13 and had to be resubmitted Jan. 18 after a new session of that legislative body was convened.

We'd always like your feedback. Let us know what articles you'd like to see!

In Loving Memory...
Jessica, Kristin and Nick



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