

Employee exposure to unguarded or inadequately guarded machines is prevalent in many workplaces. Consequently, workers who operate and maintain machinery suffer approximately 18,000 amputations, lacerations, crushing injuries, and abrasions and more than 800 deaths per year. Amputation is one of the most severe and crippling types of injuries in the occupational workplace, and it often results in permanent disability.

The purpose of machine guarding is to protect the machine operator and other employees in the work area from hazards created by ingoing nip points, rotating parts, flying chips, and sparks. Some examples of this are barrier guards, light curtains, two-hand operating devices, etc.

[\[1910.212\(a\)\(1\)\]](#)

General Requirements [\[1910.212\(a\)\(2\)\]](#):

- Guards must not create potential hazards and must be attached to the machine where possible.
- If guards cannot be attached to the machine, attach elsewhere.

Point of Operation Guarding

- The point of operation is the area on a machine where work is performed. [\[1910.212\(a\)\(3\)\(i\)\]](#)
- Machines that expose an employee to injury must be guarded. The guarding device must be in conformity with any appropriate standards. If specific standards aren't available, the machine construction should prevent the operator from having any part of his/her body in the danger zone during the operating cycle. [\[1910.212\(a\)\(3\)\(ii\)\]](#)
- Special hand tools used for placing and removing material from point of operation areas must allow easy handling of the material without the operator placing a hand in the danger zone. Such tools must not replace guards required by this section. [\[1910.212\(a\)\(3\)\(iii\)\]](#)



* Source material taken from www.osha.gov.