

# Pinch Point Safety

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Caught-in/between hazards are one of OSHA's Fatal Four in construction and account for thousands of crush, amputation and laceration injuries each year. In 2024, contact with objects and equipment caused 686 workplace fatalities (BLS). Pinch points exist wherever two objects move together — gears, rollers, doors, hinges, presses and moving machinery. A moment of inattention near a pinch point can cost you a finger or a hand.

**686**

Deaths from contact with objects/equipment in 2024 (BLS)

**#4**

Caught-in/between is OSHA's 4th Fatal Four hazard

**1 sec**

Is all it takes for a pinch point to amputate a finger

## 5 Rules for Pinch Point Safety

Every worker near moving parts or heavy equipment must follow these rules:

- 1 IDENTIFY PINCH POINTS BEFORE WORK**  
Look for gears, rollers, hinges, closing doors, hydraulic arms and any two surfaces that move together.
- 2 KEEP HANDS AND FINGERS CLEAR**  
Never reach into a pinch point — use tools, push sticks or remote controls to position materials.
- 3 NEVER REMOVE MACHINE GUARDS**  
Guards exist to keep your body out of pinch points — removing them is illegal and deadly.
- 4 WEAR SNUG-FIT GLOVES**  
Loose gloves, jewelry and clothing can be grabbed by moving parts and pull you into a pinch point.
- 5 LOCKOUT/TAGOUT BEFORE MAINTENANCE**  
De-energize and lock out equipment before reaching into any pinch point area for repair or cleaning.

## Before You Start — Quick Checklist

- Have you identified all pinch points on this equipment?
- Are all machine guards in place and secure?
- Is lockout/tagout applied before maintenance?
- Are you wearing snug-fit gloves — no loose clothing or jewelry?
- Do you know where the emergency stop button is?
- Are push sticks or remote tools available?

## Common Pinch Points on the Job Site

**Gears & Rollers:** Rotating gears and conveyor rollers grab fingers, gloves and clothing — keep hands completely clear.

**Closing Doors & Gates:** Vehicle doors, dumpster lids, tailgates and heavy doors crush fingers — use handles, never push edges.

**Hydraulic Equipment:** Excavator arms, scissor lifts and hydraulic presses create powerful pinch points — stay out of swing zones.

**Hand & Power Tools:** Pliers, clamps, wrenches near moving parts — position your grip so fingers can't be caught.

**Material Handling:** Stacking pallets, placing beams, moving pipe — fingers get crushed between objects. Use tag lines.

**Hinges & Latches:** Container hinges, gate latches, trailer connections — always watch your hand placement.

### Common Mistakes That Crush Fingers

- ✗ Reaching into a pinch point "just to adjust something" — use a tool, not your hand
- ✗ Removing a machine guard to speed up the job — guards are there for a reason, never remove them
- ✗ Wearing loose gloves near rotating parts — a glove can pull your entire hand into the mechanism
- ✗ Not locking out equipment before maintenance — stored energy activates without warning

### Safety Tips to Remember

- ✓ If your hand fits, it can be crushed — use tools to position materials near pinch points
- ✓ Machine guards save hands — if a guard is missing or damaged, stop work and report it
- ✓ Lockout/tagout is mandatory before any maintenance — no exceptions, no shortcuts
- ✓ Identify every pinch point at the start of each shift — conditions change, new hazards appear

## Discussion Questions for Your Team

1. Can you point out all the pinch points on the equipment you use today?
2. Are all machine guards in place on our equipment right now?
3. Have you ever had a close call with a pinch point? What happened?
4. Do we apply lockout/tagout every time before maintenance?
5. Where is the emergency stop on the equipment you operate?

### TOOLBOX TALK SIGN-OFF

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance sheet attached: [ ] Yes