



## Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



### Pinch Points and Hand Injuries Safety Message

We use our hands for virtually all work tasks that we do. Because of how often we use our hands, they are put in the line of fire where they can be injured. Hand injuries are the second leading type of injury on the job in the United States. A major type of injury to the hands and fingers on the job result from crushed-by incidents. Pinch points are a hazard that lead to crushed-by injuries.

#### Defining Pinch Points

A pinch point is defined as any point where it is possible for a body part to be caught between moving and stationary portions of equipment. Pinch points are found in many places throughout the workplace. Tasks such as equipment maintenance, lifting materials, assembly line work, and hooking up trailers are just a few common tasks where pinch points are a common hazard.

#### Safeguards to Avoid Pinch Points

- \* Eliminate the hazard by ensuring proper guarding is in place.
- \* Pay attention to where your hands are around any moving parts or any objects that have the potential to move.
- \* Do not place your hands where you cannot see them.
- \* Wear the proper gloves for whatever work task you are completing to reduce the amount of damage to your hands if they do end up in the line of fire.
- \* When working on equipment or machinery ensure they are properly locked out and tagged out to prevent unexpected start-up.
- \* Properly block any equipment or parts where stored energy could be released.
- \* When working with others make sure to communicate to let each other know if you are out of the line of fire before moving objects or starting up equipment.

#### Summary

Often times it is not the obvious pinch points that injure a person such as a conveyor belt or a piece of moving machinery. Many times tasks as simple as shutting a truck door will end up in a pinch point injury due to a person not paying attention to where their hands are. It is important to not get complacent and monitor where your hands are when you complete any task.