Machine/Equipment Guards

Guards are essential to protect from accidental contact or unauthorized access to machines/equipment or their components with hazardous moving parts during operation. Machines/equipment must only be operated with all guards intact and in operable condition as intended by the manufacturer.

Guards come in a variety of configurations and serve different purposes. They will not guard against the hazard if not installed, adjusted, and used as designed.

Safeguards must meet these minimum requirements:
- Prevent contact
- Prevent objects from falling into machine
- Be secure and not easily removed
- Allow for safe, efficient lubrication
- Create no interference with job function
- Create no additional hazards

Steps to remain safe around machinery and equipment include:
- Never start a machine without guards in place. After routine maintenance or repairs, double check to see that all guards have been properly replaced.
- Make sure the following points are guarded:
  - Blades
  - Rotating parts
  - Points of operation
  - Areas where chips, sparks or other debris may fly out
- Never wear loose clothing or jewelry when working around machinery.
- Make sure you know how to turn the power off should an emergency arise.
- For machines that require "feeding", always use a push block or stick. Never use your hands.
- Never reach around or under a machine guard.
- Before guards are removed for repair or adjustment, the power should be turned off, all devices de-energized and lockout procedures followed.
- Report missing or defective guards immediately to your supervisor.
- Pay attention at all times when operating or around machinery.

Supervisors/instructors are responsible for ensuring their employees/students are trained in the safe operation of the machines which will be used in the performance of their duties. Employees/students are responsible for notifying their supervisor if a guard is damaged or missing, for not operating a machine without operable guards as originally designed, and for not removing or otherwise modifying a guard.