

IM-94-26

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Department of Consumer and Business Services

May 17, 1994

TO: OR-OSHA Enforcement, Consultative, and Technical Staff

FROM: David Sparks, Deputy Administrator, OR-OSHA

SUBJECT: OR-OSHA Policy Regarding the Guarding of Machinery by Location

The purpose of this memo is to provide overall guidance to OR-OSHA staff when assessing whether or not physical machine guards, shields, or barriers to protect workers from contact with moving machine components are necessary or whether the moving machine parts are so located that they pose no hazard to workers under normal or reasonably predictable conditions.

OR-OSHA considers the moving parts of machinery to be guarded by its location when the moving machine parts are located in such a fashion that workers are prevented from inadvertently contacting moving parts during the course of their normal duties or any reasonably predictable activities associated with their duties.

To require guarding of machinery or equipment there must be exposure to a hazard where a worker is likely to contact moving components or parts. In evaluating the need for guarding the following must be determined:

1. Is there a hazard?
2. Is there worker exposure to the hazard?
3. Is there an adopted rule or consensus standard that requires some action on the part of the employer to provide worker protection against machine related hazards?

NOTE: Under some circumstances the General Duty Clause of the Oregon Safe Employment Act may be invoked.

If the answers to the above three questions is yes, then some form of machine guarding is required. OR-OSHA recognizes, however, that some moving machine components are not accessible or open to inadvertent contact by workers. If there is no worker exposure to these moving machine components while they are performing their normal and anticipated work duties, the components are considered guarded by their location.

NOTE: A fully functional lockout/tagout program that meets all OR-OSHA requirements is not a substitute for physical machine guarding where workers are exposed to moving machine components in the course of their normal or anticipated duties.

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