

Spot The Safety Violation: When Good PPE Goes Bad



What do you think went wrong here'



One of the dangers of working around machinery and equipment is the risk of clothing, hair, jewelry and even PPE becoming entangled in pinch-points or nip hazards.

This picture from the Health and Safety Executive, Great Britain's OHS regulator, shows the remnants of a glove that got caught in a high-speed milling machine. The worker wearing the glove suffered fractures and cuts to her forearm. But if the glove hadn't ripped apart, allowing her to free her arm, she could've suffered very serious injuries.

The injured worker was helping out the business owner, who was a friend. The owner did train her on his work methods and warn her about the dangers of her clothes, hair and jewelry getting caught in the machine. He also initially supervised her work.

But he didn't warn her of the risks of wearing gloves. He'd also programmed the milling machine to run non-stop while he replaced machined parts with new ones by hand. And he left guard screens around the machine open.

The owner pleaded guilty to failing to prevent access to dangerous parts of the machinery and was fined £4,000. After a hearing, the HSE Inspector said that the owner's 'practice of

reaching in and out of a milling machine operating at high speed was very dangerous. But it becomes even more so working with gloves on.' He added, 'Safety guards are there for a reason'The milling should have been done with guards in place.'

Entanglements involving clothing and other items happen in Canada, too.

Example: An Ontario worker was working at a tube/hose extruder, where tubing was made and then wound up on a spool. A rod protruding from the spool's shaft/collar caught the end of his shirt tail and pulled him down and around the spool several times. He sustained several severe injuries. His employer was fined \$80,000 for a guarding violation [*Parker Canada Holding Co.*, Govt. News Release, July 3, 2014].

7 Tips for Preventing Entanglements

Workers should follow these seven tips to avoid entanglements in machinery:

1. Wear close-fitting clothing.
2. Tuck your shirt into your pants.
3. If you must wear a long-sleeved shirt to comply with OHS requirements, button the cuffs. If long sleeves aren't required, wear short sleeves.
4. Don't wear gloves when working near rotating shafts or other moving machine parts. If you must wear gloves for OHS reasons, make sure they're suitable for the task.
5. Don't wear jewelry. ([Discipline workers who violate your no-jewelry policy.](#))
6. Wear long hair in a bun, tied back or covered with a hat or hairnet.

7. Keep facial hair short.

In addition, ensure that machinery and equipment have [proper guards](#) and [bar workers from removing or bypassing these guards](#).