

Safety Note #22

PINCH POINT HAZARDS



When two rotating mechanical parts move together with at least one of the parts moving in a circle, a pinch point hazard is created. Agricultural equipment and machinery frequently have pinch point hazards including gear, belt, and chain drives, sprockets, conveyors, and feed rolls. California Code of Regulations (CCR) addresses pinch points under Title 8, Sections 3440, 3999, 4002, 4070, and 4075.

General Pinch Point Information

- Types of pinch point injuries include amputations, lacerations, contusions, crushing of tissues and bones, and broken bones.
- Rotating mechanical parts move too fast for you to escape once you have become entangled in a pinch point.
- Gears, sprockets, sprocket chain drives, and moving parts of belt and pulley drives located seven feet or less above the floor are required by California regulations to have safety guards or shields.

Pinch Point Safety Precautions

- Always be aware of pinch points that are present in your work environment, including those associated with equipment or machinery you may use or work with and/or near.
- Prior to use, assure all covers and protective shields for equipment and machinery pinch point hazards are in place.
- Loose clothing, jewelry, and hair can be pulled into pinch points. Accordingly, wear snug clothing, remove jewelry, and tie long hair back or secure under a cap before working in the vicinity of pinch point hazards.
- Place and maintain warning labels adjacent to pinch point hazards.
- Never place your hands near or reach across rotating mechanical parts.
- Always be alert whenever you place your fingers, hands, toes, or feet between any objects.
- Do not operate equipment or machinery without required guards or shields.
- Shut off and de-energize equipment or machinery before performing maintenance or repairs.
- Always replace guards or shields after completing equipment and machinery maintenance or repairs.

