

Safety Note #52

PAPER SHREDDER SAFETY



*Photograph Courtesy of
REC Administrative Office*

Consumer Product Safety Commission data indicate a total of approximately 2,000 people were treated in hospitals for business and office machine injuries during 2003. Many of these injuries involved lacerations to fingers from paper shredders. Most injuries were due to operator inattention or error.

California Code of Regulations Title 8, Section 3203 (7) requires employees be trained on the equipment they use in the workplace.

Pre-Use Activities

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the paper shredder operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Before using, always inspect the paper shredder for damage or disrepair. Inspect the electrical cord and plug for defects.
- If the paper shredder fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the shredder from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.

Operating Precautions

- Locate the paper shredder and power cord outside of foot traffic areas.
- Paper shredder should be located at least 4 inches from walls or furniture to allow air to freely flow through ventilation slots.
- Always be alert and focus on the shredding task when using a paper shredder.
- Keep jewelry, long hair, or loose clothing (i.e., neckties) away from the paper shredder feed opening.
- Never put fingers or objects other than paper (i.e., paper clips or staples) into the shredder feed opening.
- Feed paper smoothly into the shredder. Never force paper into a shredder.
- Shred paper in small quantities to avoid jamming the shredder.
- If the shredder motor overheats, turn the paper shredder off and allow the motor to cool for about 15 minutes before using again.
- Always disconnect the power source before removing and emptying the waste box or cleaning the paper shredder.
- Do not use aerosol cleaners to clean a paper shredder. Only clean the paper shredder using a cloth with soap and water.