Hazards of Operating Unguarded Stone Cutting Machines

Stone-cutting machines have hydraulically operated rams to split and cut various types of stone products used for decoration in the landscaping industry. The use of these types of machines equipped with unguarded cutting blades can result in amputations and other serious injuries.

The most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that 180 injuries occurred while using shears, similar machines. The injuries are listed as100 amputations and 50 described as cuts, lacerations and punctures.

Under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970* (OSH Act), employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their workers.

The OSHA Safety and Health Information Bulletin (SHIB) describes prevention methods such as:

- Using machine-guarding methods that eliminate worker access to the cutting blades on stone-cutting machines, called the "point of operation;"
- Ensuring that machine-guarding components are properly installed and inspected daily, prior to use; and
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision to workers on safe work practices when using stone-cutting machines.

The SHIB and other requirements and recommendations are available at the United States Department of Labor website at:

https://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib01252013.html

As always, please contact your Safety Specialist with any questions or concerns. We hope you find this information helpful.

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