Job site: _____ Date: _____
Foreman: _____ G.C. _____

SMOHIT Safety Sense
Toolbox Talks for the Sheet Metal Industry

Basics of Machine Guarding

- Almost all machines that sheet metal workers use are equipped with guards that protect workers from flying parts of the machine or workpieces that could cause serious injuries.
- Any machine that grinds, shears, presses, punches, squeezes, cuts, rolls, mixes, or has pinch points or sharp edges that could cause potential harm to any worker, should have a guard shielding the hazard.
- Machine guards should prevent moving parts of the machine from coming into contact with workers' arms, hands, or any other part of the body.
- Some workers find machine guards to be aggravating and try to remove them from machines. Guards should be secure and should not be easily removed. They should be maintained in good condition, made of durable material, and bolted or screwed to the machine so that tools are necessary for the removal of guards.
- While guards are there to protect workers, they should not interfere with the work to be performed. Machine guards should allow workers to use the machines comfortably and efficiently without hindering work.
- Effective and useful machine guarding can be very hard in our trade as we make custom work that can change with each piece we fabricate.
- A good machine guard is one that allows for maintenance to be performed without removing the guard or being exposed to the potential hazard. Remove a guard only if it is necessary for service or adjustment purposes. If possible, de-energize the machine and follow lockout/tagout procedures before removing machine guards or performing any maintenance work to the machine. Replace machine guards immediately after maintenance or repair work is finished.
- Be sure to respect any guards installed and keep them in place when operating machinery.

Instructor Tips

- **Point out examples of machine guards in the work area and explain what hazard the guard is protecting against.**
- **Emphasize the importance of de-energizing, locking, and tagging machines when removing guards for service or adjustment.**

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Reference: OSHA 29 CFR 1910.212