



CompWest Loss Lessons: Punch Press Accident

True Story

While setting up a punch press, an interlock switch became inadvertently depressed. Because of this, the press initiated a cycle and led to the machine operator suffering a hand injury.

Lessons Learned

- Workers not being adequately trained on energy control procedures
- The barrier guard interlock not being installed properly
- The interlock device being too close to the operator's path of travel and could be disengaged by accidental contact
- A malfunction of the connection of the dual hand controls and interlock malfunction
- Equipment not being checked prior to use
- Additional machine guarding features impacting the existing safety systems

Prevention Tips

- Regularly train employees on proper energy control (lockout-tagout) practices
- Routinely check and document the condition of equipment

- Provide post documentation (e.g., completed safety checklist) at operator's workstation to provide verification that the required safety checks have been completed
- Consult with the equipment manufacturer before making modifications and use only certified technicians to complete approved modifications
- Immediately notify a supervisor/manager of needed maintenance or repairs
- Implement Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) procedures if any machine guard is removed or before any maintenance or repairs are conducted
- Ensure that proper maintenance procedures are followed and that the presses are repaired, when necessary, prior to use
- Conduct routine safety inspections to identify and address unsafe conditions and practices

Additional Resources

- [CompWest Lockout/Tagout Program](#)
- [Cal/OSHA Power Press Safety Fact Sheet](#)
- [OSHA Machine Guarding eTool](#)
- [PMA Mechanical Power Presses Checklist](#)

The advice presented in this document is intended as general information for employers. For further information, please contact your CompWest loss control consultant.

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