

# WORKING ON A CONVEYOR BELT

Most hazards are related to getting caught in the conveyor system or using the same muscles over and over while loading a conveyor.



## Hazard: No or Inadequate Guarding

### Details

Typical conveyor hazards occur:

- Where power is transmitted
- At nip points, shear points, pinch points, and spill points
- At transfer counterweights and transfer mechanisms
- Where workers can walk or drive under the conveyor
- When there are special circumstances

### Threat

- Broken bones
- Amputation
- Death
- Serious injury from falling or moving product

### Safe Work Guidelines

- Make sure that the guarding provided is in place
- Do not remove or alter conveyor guards or safety devices
- Make sure that roller and drive components of the conveyor are physically guarded so that they are not accessible
- Make sure that netting or other protective guarding is in place beneath overhead conveyors
- Make sure that the conveyor has been serviced only by trained and authorized personnel

Note: Your employer is responsible for having all conveyor equipment carefully checked to ensure that guarding is provided for all exposed power transmission equipment and that guarding is maintained.

To be considered effective, guarding of conveyor pinch points must reduce the risk of anyone reaching over, around, through or under the guard, and also prevent loose articles such as clothing from coming into contact with them.

## Hazard: No or Inadequate Safety Features

### Details

Problems may occur on a conveyor system in locations that are out of sight of the starting and stopping controls.

### Threat

- Broken bones
- Amputation
- Death

- Make sure that ON and OFF buttons or pull cords are available anywhere along the conveyor where workers could touch or be pulled in by unguarded roller pinch points or be hit by passing loads
- If the entire conveyor belt is not within sight of the starting control, make sure that you can warn everyone working along the belt before you start it
- If you cannot see packages on the conveyor, make sure that there are warning devices near the receiving area to prevent the conveyor from becoming overfull

### Hazard: Unsafe Work Practices

#### Details

The use of unsafe work practices exposes employees to the risk of becoming entangled in the conveyor and of being hit by product.

#### Threat

- Broken bones
- Amputation
- Severe injury from falling or moving product
- Death

#### Safe Work Guidelines

##### At All Times

- Do not climb, step, sit, or ride on a conveyor at any time
- Keep the area around the conveyor clear
- Report any unsafe condition or practice to your supervisor
- Do not service a conveyor unless you are an authorized maintenance person
- Cross over a conveyor only at a designated area

#### Before Use

- Know where the emergency shut-off devices are and how to use them
- Make sure that nothing is blocking any stopping or starting control devices

#### During Use

- Wear personal protective equipment (e.g., safety shoes) as required
- Make sure that everyone is clear of the conveyor
- Operate the conveyor only if you have been trained how to use it
- Keep your clothing, fingers, hair, and other parts of your body away from the conveyor
- Do not load too much on a conveyor or anything that it is not designed to carry
- Do not stack product or cartons on the conveyor
- Position yourself so that objects moving down the conveyor do not hit you
- If an overhead conveyor is in use, wear a hardhat
- Do not attempt to clear product jams while the conveyor is running

### Hazard: Improper Clothing

#### Details

Clothing can get caught in conveyor belts.

#### Threat

- Broken bones
- Amputation
- Death

#### Safe Work Guidelines

- Tie back long hair
- Do not wear loose clothing
- Do not wear jewellery that could get caught

## Hazard: Loading

### Details

Muscles can get tired if employees spend long periods of time loading conveyors.

### Threat

- Repetitive strain injuries to the shoulder and wrist
- Back injuries

### Safe Work Guidelines

If you spend long periods of time standing and loading a conveyor:

- Make sure that you wear the right footwear for your job
- Wear padded shoe inserts that support your feet
- Stand on a cushioned floor mat
- Take mini-breaks sitting down to relieve stress on your leg muscles
- If you are working to keep up with a conveyor, make sure that you can take a break when your arms get tired
- Consider using a sit-stand stool to lean against to take some of the weight off your feet
- Make sure that where you feed the conveyor is at a comfortable height for you
- If the conveyor is angled, load or unload the conveyor at a location that allows you to lift with minimal bending. Consider using a sturdy step stool to elevate shorter workers
- Don't overreach for product coming down the conveyor, wait for it to get to you
- Avoid reaching behind your body and twisting – move and pivot your feet instead
- Consider installing a deflector on wide belts to move the product closer to the worker to avoid repeated reaching

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