



SAFEGUARDING TABLE AND PANEL SAWS — CREW HANDOUT

Why the guard?

Simply put, the guard is there to protect you from contact with the saw blade. The rim speed of a 10" circular saw blade is approximately 225 km/h. The saw blade does not differentiate between you and the stock. It only takes a split second to amputate your fingers.

The blade does not differentiate between the stock and your hands!

Guards protect you against unforeseen and unpredictable circumstances, such as kickbacks or jammed materials, including accidental contact with the blade.

Common situations where injuries occur

1. **Hands too close to the blade** — When the stock unexpectedly moves or your hands slip, an accident can occur. Whenever possible, use a push stick. Customize push sticks for the application.
2. **Inadequate support for the stock** — You need to use an outfeed table of adequate length to support long work pieces during the cutting process. Avoid reaching over the blade to retrieve the stock or waste piece. If the saw does not have an outfeed table, ask someone to assist you.
3. **Clearing jammed stock** — If the stock gets jammed between the fence and the blade, stop the saw, wait for the blade to come to a complete stop, and then clear the stock from the saw.

4. **Saw guard not properly adjusted and maintained** — Watch to see if there is excess clearance between the top of the stock and the guard. If needed, adjust the guard so it effectively covers the blade.
5. **Hand position** — Keep your hands as far away from the blade as possible while maintaining control of the stock.
6. **Kickbacks** — A kickback is more likely to occur when you are:
 - ripping solid wood
 - using a dull saw blade or the wrong blade for the application
 - cutting with the bottom of the blade gullet more than 1/4" above the top of the stock
 - not using a splitter or anti-kickback device when ripping
 - cutting poor-quality lumber

Avoid injury — Know your point of operation

The point of operation is where the saw blade contacts the stock.

~ If a guard is missing off your saw, report it to your supervisor. ~

Keep yourself safe

1. Make sure the blade is effectively guarded.
2. Use a sharp blade that is designed for the application.
3. Whenever possible, use an appropriate push stick to feed the stock past the blade.
4. In applications where you can't use a guard, use an appropriate push stick, jig, feather board, or similar device to prevent you from reaching into the cutting area. When you have completed the application, you must replace the guard.

Don't become a statistic

Do you know these people?

Puncture wounds to forearm and abdomen

A worker was cutting a 12-foot plank on a trim saw. A large sliver kicked back and punctured the worker's arm and abdomen.

Amputation

A worker's hand was almost completely amputated when he contacted an unguarded jump (chop) saw activated by foot control.

Amputation of three fingers and partial amputation of thumb

A worker was cutting a piece of wood three inches wide on a table saw equipped with an unguarded blade. The wood started to climb on the saw blade. As the worker reached down to hold the wood, one hand contacted the running blade.

These accidents could have been potentially avoided with the use of safeguards on equipment.

NOTICE what is going on around you

SPOT any unsafe conditions before you start to work on equipment or machinery

ACT by telling your supervisor of any unsafe conditions. Watch out for yourself and your co-workers

Avoid a life-altering event for you and your family

Did you know that in the five years from 2001 to 2005 there were 208 amputations and 1048 serious cut and laceration injuries in your industry in B.C.?

Injuries associated with unguarded equipment and machinery often result in amputations, disfigurement, or death.

