Amputation

Utah OSHA has a Local Emphasis Program (LEP) in place designed to identify and reduce workplace hazards that cause, or are likely to cause, amputations. The failure to properly apply machine guarding techniques and the failure to adequately control associated energy hazards during servicing and/or maintenance activities are the primary causes of amputation. In July of 2015, an amputation injury occurred at BYU, and Utah OSHA responded with an on-site inspection. As a result of the inspection, BYU received two serious violations and a substantial fine. The citations noted an absence of machine guarding and the required lockout/tagout.

In an effort to promote a safe campus, where employees are protected against amputation hazards, the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry is proactively seeking to remedy any machine guarding and lockout/tagout-related issues. Currently, the Safety Committee is seeking to add guards to all vacuum pumps that are used throughout the Benson Building, even those inside of cabinets. To further aid in this training, introductory machine guarding and lockout/tagout trainings are available to BYU employees and students on Y-Train. Risk Management also provides classroom trainings at request and can help users identify machine guarding violations like those pictured above.

Given BYU has received two serious violations related to an amputation, there is a heightened probability that BYU may fall into the LEP safety and health inspection schedule. A health and safety inspection performed by Utah OSHA is very thorough and includes a walkthrough and inspection of any and all machines that present an amputation hazard. It could rapidly expand to a campus-wide inspection that would include both academic and non-academic groups and facilities and may extend for a period of years. Any violation discovered during the LEP inspection would result, at a minimum, in fines and required abatement. Additionally, if another employee amputation injury occurs through October 31, 2019, both the resultant violation fines and the probability of an inspection increases substantially.
Fume Hoods

Chemical fume hoods are one of our most valuable pieces of personal protective equipment. Unfortunately, improper use of a fume hood essentially can counteract these protective measures. Recently, the Safety Committee has teamed up with Y-Train to develop a training about chemical fume hood safety. Watch for a new training (Y-Train, Fume Hood Safety) coming out later this month!

One common problem we have noticed throughout the building is sashes left open. Please remember that this not only defeats the purpose of the hood, but also weakens the flow rates of connected hoods throughout the building. **Close your sashes when not in use.**

If you work with fume hoods often, please review this training, as well as these key points to remember:

- Keep the sash as low as possible
- Open and close the sash slowly
- Discourage swift movement near the hood
- Work at least 6 inches inside the hood
- Elevate equipment
- Check baffles
- Do not store chemicals in the hood
- Close the sash completely when the hood is not in use