



Machine Guarding for Commercial Mixers

The most common machine-related recommendation in the restaurant, food service and food manufacturing industry involves the need for commercial mixer guarding.

Major injury types associated with unguarded mixers include:

- Cuts, bruises, fractures or even amputation and death due to worker contact with rotating parts of the mixers.
- Workers getting their hands caught in the bowl during operations, such as when adding ingredients, cleaning the machine and contacting rotating parts before the parts have come to a complete stop.

Guarding Commercial Mixers

PROVIDING GUARDS

Typically, it's older equipment that is unguarded. And, guards may be difficult to obtain especially for very old models. The old models were designed for a different time and work environment than we have now. Newer mixers typically come with adequate guarding, including interlocks that do not allow the machine to run unless the guard is present and closed.



GUARD CONFUSION AND BUYING THE RIGHT GUARD

Typically, the kind of guard required will be of sturdy wire rod or mesh, which allows ingredients to be poured through the openings in the mesh while preventing contact with the mixer's moving parts. A number of OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturers) retrofit guards and some aftermarket "universal" type guards of the appropriate type can be found through online suppliers, or from commercial kitchen equipment suppliers and service companies. However, it's important to keep in mind splash guards are not acceptable as proper machine guarding.

Here is a sample of a proper guard.



On the other hand, this is an example of a splash guard that is not acceptable as machine guarding.



Training Procedures for Using Commercial Mixers

It is necessary to train employees on guarding safety and safe use of commercial mixers, including proper guard placement. Some of the proper procedures include:

- How to install, use, and remove the guard in normal mixing operations.
- Establishing and observing rules such as no long hair, loose clothing, apron strings or jewelry that can get caught in the rotating mechanisms.
- Knowing what the machine's controls do, their locations and the use of emergency stop controls, and other operating functions of the machine.

For additional resources and other safety and risk management subjects, visit the AmTrust Loss Control website: www.amtrustfinancial.com/LossControl

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