

## Temporary Worker Seriously Injures Hand Unclogging Dust Collection Machine

**Industry:** Manufacturing  
**Task:** Machine Maintenance

**Release Date:** July 13, 2011  
**Occupation:** Laborer

A 21-year-old is not expected to regain the full use of his hand after it was caught in a clogged dust collection machine. Four fingers were broken and the skin from two fingers and the back of his hand was removed when the machine was started by the victim's supervisor. The victim's hand was caught in the fan as he tried to reach the blockage. Earlier, the victim's supervisor tried to reach the blockage but was unable to. The victim then tried, believing his longer arms could reach the blockage. The supervisor was unaware that the victim's arm was inside the machine when she started it.

The worker was from a temporary help agency and was employed one month at the storm water filtration equipment manufacturer when the incident occurred. The company had a lockout/tagout plan in place to prevent these injuries. The victim had not been trained in the lockout/tagout plan. The victim is likely to be out of work for more than six months.



### Employer Requirements

- Create a lockout/tagout or other energy control program to protect employees that service or maintain any equipment that can unexpectedly start up or release stored energy. See [WAC 296-803-20005](#).
- Provide and document employee training on your energy control program. See [WAC 296-803-60005](#).
- Provide additional training if you use tagout devices. See [WAC 296-806-60010](#).
- For temporary workers, both the temporary service agency and the employer are responsible for properly training employees. See Department of Labor and Industries Division of Occupational Safety and Health [Regional Directive 1.15](#) on Dual Employers and DOSH Enforcement.

### Recommendations

- Do not put any body part in a machine without it being properly shut down; make sure all necessary steps are taken to ensure that the machine cannot be inadvertently started while a body part is in the machine.
- Only properly trained and capable workers should perform repair and maintenance on machinery.
- Whenever possible use machines that are equipped with fail safe devices. A fail safe device prevents a machine from starting while an employee is working on it. Examples include pressure sensitive mats or fail safe sensors. If these are not available contact your supervisor.

### Resources

- Free workplace safety and health consultations are available from L&I at: [www.SafetyConsult.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.SafetyConsult.Lni.wa.gov)
- An online lockout/tagout safety course is available at:  
<http://wisha-training.lni.wa.gov/Training/articulate/LOTO/player.html>
- View sample of lockout/tagout procedures at:  
[www.lni.wa.gov/wisha/rules/locktagout/helpfultools.htm](http://www.lni.wa.gov/wisha/rules/locktagout/helpfultools.htm)

### Need more information?

Please contact Eric Jalonen,  
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