

Caught In/Between Rollers

In late 2006, a fabrication shop employee's hand was pulled into the rollers of a rebar spiral-bending machine resulting in the loss of two fingers on his right hand. The spiral bending machine is used to bend rebar into spiral loops. The equipment was over 40 years old, purchased from a bankrupt iron fabrication company. There were no operating and/or maintenance instructions and all labels were either missing or illegible.

On the day of the incident, the employee was working alone as is customary, when the equipment began to malfunction. He grabbed the rebar spiral loop to try to guide it into the proper shape and his leather glove got caught in the rollers and pulled his right hand into the rollers.



There were no guards of any type on the machine. The chain and sprocket assembly was unguarded, and the design of the machine was such that the rollers could not be guarded without interfering with the work.

Citations were issued totaling \$4,250

Recommendations:

1. When purchasing older equipment without operating and/or maintenance manuals, contact the manufacturer to obtain a copy and for updated information regarding machine guards and other updated safety information.
2. Develop safe operating procedures including the use and fit of personal protective equipment that will neither interfere with the work nor create additional hazards.
3. If the machinery is not operating properly, report the condition to the appropriate person so that the equipment can be repaired. Never attempt to fix or modify equipment without proper training.
4. Employees should be trained in safe operating procedures and practices when working with any machinery or equipment.
5. Guards and other safety devices should be installed and used properly at all times.