



# Safety Scene

## Pre-Start Checklists

Safety and maintenance inspections are a fast and easy way to save time and money, while preventing injuries.

by Molly E. Butz

In a component manufacturing plant, there are numerous pieces of equipment that get used on a daily basis. From component saws to roller presses, each individual machine has its own distinct safety and maintenance checkpoints. In 2003, 4.4 million nonfatal injuries and illnesses were reported in private industry workplaces. You can help prevent injuries in your facility by creating a pre-start checklist for each of your pieces of equipment. They are a quick and easy way to combine a safety and maintenance inspection routine that your operators can use at the beginning of each shift.

On the facing page is a simplified example of a pre-start checklist. As you can see, the concept for the checklist is straightforward: Create a detailed list of the items that present safety risks and maintenance concerns. You'll also want to leave space to mark whether the items are ok or in need of repair. In addition, a reasonable amount of space for comments is helpful for a description, should there be a problem. At the bottom of the checklist, provide a space for the name of the person completing the checklist, date, shift and supervisor's initials.

Once your operator has completed the checklist, it can be turned over to a supervisor. If there happens to be a problem, the supervisor can determine whether the machine can indeed be operated and a maintenance work order needs to be submitted, or if it should be shut down and repaired before operation. Remember that if you develop such forms, it is good practice to see to it that the forms are fully completed each time they are used.

### The Ticking Clock

Of course, even though it seems like a simple process, you may still be thinking, "We don't have time for this." Shane Weitzenkamp of Structural Component Systems, Inc. in Boone, IA, has implemented this procedure at his facility and he'll be the first to tell you that you don't have time *not* to do this.

"The comparison I would use is this: it's like when you take your car in for a quick oil change at one of those quick lube places," Shane says. "They actually have a couple of their employees checking all of the other fluid levels, turn signals, lights, etc. The same can be done here utilizing a couple of your employees that know which parts they need to check." After that, Shane concludes, it's just a matter of communicating whether the items are suitable for operation.

"The pre-start checklists we've developed can be done quickly," Shane adds, "but at the same time, with enough thoroughness, the majority of safety and maintenance problems can be found before the machine is operated." Having all of the safety hazards in order while managing your maintenance scheduling means that pre-start checklists will actually save you time in the long-run, and they may even save one of your employees from a possible injury, too!

### Safety: Everyone's Responsibility

In addition to time savings and risk reduction, you may find that pre-start checklists may have other positive effects as well. The philosophy at Shane's company revolves around teamwork, and the operators are encouraged to take on a good

share of responsibility for their specific areas.

"By doing a walk around and performing an inspection on a daily basis," Shane explains, "our operators take ownership of their equipment. It helps us achieve a much higher degree of employee involvement from a safety standpoint."

Pre-start checklists are an ideal way to promote safety awareness and encourage employee participation. They also make it easier to keep track of long-term maintenance plans and are an excellent way to keep production moving right along. If you've been looking for a way to virtually eliminate accidents as well as a method for identifying potential maintenance issues, create your pre-start checklists today—they'll save time and maybe even a life! **SBC**

To pose a question for this column or to learn more about WTCA's Operation Safety Program, contact WTCA Staff at 608/274-4849, email [wtca@sbcindustry.com](mailto:wtca@sbcindustry.com), or view the Operation Safety demonstration online at [www.wtcalco.com](http://www.wtcalco.com).

### MACHINE A: PRE-START CHECKLIST

CHECK POINTS	OK	NEEDS REPAIR	COMMENTS
Emergency Stop(s): Shuts down all motors when pushed.			
Emergency Stop Cable(s): Shuts down all motors when pulled.			
Emergency Stop Photo Eye(s): Shuts down all motors when blocked.			
All Machine Guarding: In place, secured and in good condition.			
All Motor Brakes: Working correctly.			
Shafts, Chains & Sprockets: No damage or unusual wear/tear.			
Area Cleanliness: Clear of all scraps, plates, banding and other trip hazards.			
Lubrication: All appropriate parts are lubricated properly.			
Operator Controls: All lights, hand-held controls and foot pedals in good condition.			
Lighting: All lights are working correctly; all light guards are in place.			
Name: _____			
Date: _____		Shift: _____	
Supervisor Initials: _____			

John Griffith

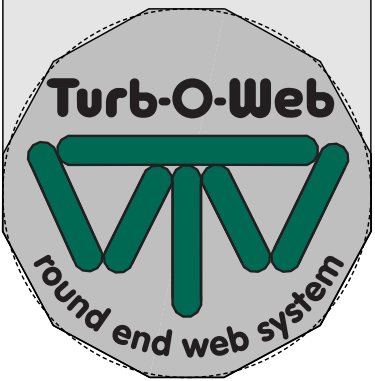
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