

Line of Fire Hazards

The term “line of fire” describes situations where workers are in harm’s way from the path of a moving object. Line of fire injuries occur when the path of a moving object, or the release of hazardous energy, impacts the victim.

Workers should be trained to understand what the term line of fire means and how line of fire accidents can be prevented.

The three basic types or classifications of Line of Fire hazards are Caught-In or Between, Released Energy, and Struck By. The first step in the prevention process is recognizing these hazards on the job.

Caught-In or Between Hazards

Caught-In or Between hazards can result in injuries to a person being squeezed, caught, crushed, pinched, or compressed between two or more objects, or between parts of an object. Examples include machinery with unguarded moving parts, unprotected trenches, or excavations, and conditions where workers could be crushed between rolling, sliding, or shifting objects.

Released Energy Hazards

Line of Fire incidents can also result from the sudden release of hazardous energy. For example, workers have been killed or seriously injured when inflating a pneumatic tire or removing a split rim assembly from a vehicle without following the required procedures.

Struck By Hazards

Struck” is defined as: injuries produced by forcible contact or impact between the injured person and an object or piece of equipment. Workers are most often struck by heavy equipment and vehicles, like trucks and cranes; falling or flying objects, like tools and flying particles and concrete or masonry walls that collapse or fall during construction.

The best way to prevent Line of Fire incidents is to identify and eliminate the hazards whenever possible. The OSHA Hierarchy of Controls should always be followed when selecting controls for these and other hazards. Ensure that all Line of Fire hazards are identified and controlled at your workplace and never place yourself in the Line of Fire.

