



MNOSHA Instruction **STD 1-12.16A**

October 13, 2025

SUBJECT: Horizontal and Vertical Band Saws For Use Other Than Cutting Wood

Purpose:

To clarify requirements for guarding the point of operation or unused run of the blade of vertical and horizontal band saws used on metal, plastic and other non-wood products including meat.

Scope:

This directive applies MNOSHA-wide.

References:

1. General Industry Regulations and Standards, [29 CFR 1910.212](#), “General Requirements for Machine Guarding.”
2. American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI) Standard ANSI B11.10.2003 (R2020) – “Safety Requirements for Metal Cutting Machines”.
3. American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI) Standard ANSI B11.19-2019 – “Performance Requirements for Risk Reduction Measures: Safeguarding and other Means of Deducing Risk”.
4. NSF International Standard / American National Standards Institute, Inc. NSF/ANSI 8 - 2023 Commercial Powered Food Preparation Equipment
5. [Federal OSHA Standard Interpretation dated 10/11/1977](#), “The point of operation guarding on the Biro Power Meat Cutters (bandsaws)”.

Cancellation:

This directive supersedes STD 1-12.16 issued September 27, 2017.

Background:

OSHA's general industry machinery and machine guarding regulations ([29 CFR Part 1910 Subpart O](#)) require that one or more guarding methods be provided to protect employees from exposure to hazardous machine energy. Contact with the blade is the most common cause of injury associated with band saws. Extreme caution is necessary because the operator's hands may come close to the saw blade, and a band saw cannot be completely guarded.

[29 CFR 1910.212](#) covers the general requirements for machine guarding to protect the operator and other employees in the work area from hazards "such as those created by point of operation, ingoing nip points, rotating parts, and flying chips and sparks".

This policy applies to band saws, whether configured vertically or horizontally, which are used for cutting materials other than wood. For band saws used to cut wood, please reference [29 CFR 1910.213\(j\)](#) and the [Federal OSHA eTool for Woodworking](#).

ACTION:

The point of operation, including both the area where work is performed and the unused run of the blade not required to be exposed for the cutting operation, is to be guarded by a point of operation guard if an employee is exposed. The guard is to cover the exposed portion of the blade between the saw guide(s) and the frame of the machine.

- A. **Horizontal cutoff band saws:** The point of operation in horizontal cutoff band saw machines is the plane in the machine work area delineated by the maximum dimension of the opening in the machine frame when measured along the cutting tool, and the maximum vertical dimension between the work support and the toothed edge of the cutting tool when the head is retracted to maximum capacity.
- B. **Vertical contour band saws:** The point of operation in vertical contour band saw machines is the maximum exposure area of the cutting tool when measured vertically between the work support and the opening of the machine frame.
- C. **Vertical cutoff - moving table-type band saws:** The point of operation in the moving-table type of vertical cutoff band saw machine is the maximum exposure area of the cutting tool when measured vertically between the work support and the opening of the machine frame.
- D. **Guarding for the unused portion of the blade:** Guarding is required to cover the portion of the blade within the point of operation area which is not required to be exposed for the cutting operation.

Adjustable guards to meet these requirements are readily available from most manufacturers. An employer may also fabricate shop-made guards.

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If the guarding for the unused portion of the band saw blade used by an employee is not provided or properly adjusted, CSHO shall propose a citation for [29 CFR 1910.212\(a\)\(1\)](#)

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Distribution: OSHA Compliance and WSC Director

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