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Health and Safety Executive		Sector Information Minute	
Agriculture and Food Sector		SIM 01/2001/53 (formerly SIM 05/2001/17)	
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Target Audience

Inspectors responsible for the food and drink industries
Specialist Group Inspectors (Mech and Elec Eng)

SAFEGUARDING FLAT BELT CONVEYORS IN THE FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRIES

This SIM indicates an alternative new approach to safeguarding conveyors in the food and drink industries and introduces new published guidance on safeguarding conveyors in these industries.

INJURY HISTORY


1 Analysis of accidents in the food and drink industries over a 10-year period has shown conveyors cause 30% of machinery injuries investigated by HSE - more than any other class of machine. Around 50 serious injuries are investigated each year.

SAFEGUARDING

2 Traditionally, fixed guards have been provided on conveyors to safeguard dangerous parts but these can cause cleaning difficulties and sometimes guards are not replaced properly.

3 The Food Section has discussed conveyor safeguarding with the industry through a liaison committee comprising food equipment supplier and user trade associations. The committee agreed that, for the food and drink industries, an alternative to fixed guards might be interlocked guards which can easily be removed to allow cleaning but which prevent the conveyor running until replaced.

GUIDANCE

4 Guidance on conveyor safeguarding in general and the possibility of using interlocked guards is contained in new [Food Information Sheet 25 Safeguarding flat belt conveyors in the food and drink industries.](#) 

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