

**Sometimes it's even more important to put safety rules in place regarding equipment and processes that you don't often perform than it is to address more familiar activities and tasks.**

I hope that you all had a very happy Valentine's Day and are looking forward—as I am—to warmer weather. Remember to ask your employees to drive carefully this time of year. One of the spotlights in this issue of *Gear Solutions* is lubrication. We have previously discussed the importance of proper lubrication on machines from a safety standpoint, but it definitely bears repeating. The lack of proper lubrication on a gear hobbing machine can cause mechanical problems to the machine, of course, but it can also create a very hazardous situation for the operator as well as other employees in the area. As we all know, in the hobbing process both the cutter and the hob are rotating as the gear teeth are being cut. If, due to the lack of proper lubrication, one or the other spindles on the machine stop, not only will the cutter and the part be damaged, but there is a very real chance for the cutter, the part, or both to come flying out of the machine, possibly creating a serious injury—or even worse.


There are many other problems created by improper lubrication, not the least of which is the loss of production when the machine must be put out of service for repairs. We must maintain our machines, which at the very least involves a program of maintaining the proper lubrication in the machine. Most machine manufacturers are happy to provide a lubrication schedule, and if the manufacturer is no longer in busi-

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ness we are very fortunate in this country to have a large network of used machinery dealers and rebuilders that can furnish the necessary information. I highly recommend that you check your records to assure that this information is readily available to your employees. If you are having any problems acquiring the correct information for your equipment, please contact me and I will be happy to try to assist you.

Another subject in the magazine this month is broaching. For many of us in the gear industry this is a process that is only occasionally used in our facility, and it is therefore a process that we are not as familiar with as we should be. This is a safety concern in itself. How many of us address these processes that we only occasionally use in our safety manuals? I would be willing to bet that many of these processes are often ignored, from a safety

standpoint. Each of these processes have their own safety concerns, and they must be addressed. Are the employees assigned to these jobs suitably trained? Are they given the proper safety instructions prior to operating this equipment? Have all of the necessary safety factors been taken into consideration? I see many shops operating broaching equipment that has been in use for many years and is not equipped with the proper guarding, or even operating controls. This is a very real safety hazard that must be addressed, particularly in the case of the shops that only use this equipment occasionally. I urge you to take a close look at this equipment and correct any safety hazards that exist.

In my last column we discussed the safety issues involved with the use of hand tools. While thinking about writing this installment last evening, I caught an episode of “Home Makeover” on the tube. During this particular show one of the stars was very seriously injured while operating a hand grinder. It just points out that any of us, even a well-trained professional, can be seriously injured or even killed while doing something we often take for granted. We all need to take a step back and look at what we are doing. We need to make sure that we are not the cause of an accident. It's definitely better to take a little extra time to perform a task safely rather than losing the ability to ever do that particular type of project again. 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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