

Mortar Mixers: Check the Guarded Work Cycle

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Why this matters

Charging, discharging and cleaning create different mixer hazards. A running motor does not prove that the guard, receiving arrangement or cleanup isolation is ready.

Objective: Verify the guarded loading and discharge arrangement and safe cleanup handoff.

Key hazards or failure points

Moving paddles; drive entanglement; tipping-drum pinch points; unexpected restart; dry-mix dust; wet-mortar contact; electrical exposure.

Practical controls

- Use the actual mixer instructions and trained operator. Set up stable equipment and receiving containers, protected supply connections and clear access. Keep guards and safety devices installed; never bypass them.
- Use the specified guarded charging method and assessed dust controls for the identified material. Keep hands and implements outside moving parts. Maintain suitable contact protection, washing access and a clear discharge movement area.
- Follow the equipment-specific shutdown and isolation process before clearing, guarded access or cleanup. Control possible restart and drum movement; a stop switch alone does not establish the safe state.

Verify It in the Field

With equipment in its prescribed inspection state, compare guards, closures and controls with the model instructions. Conduct only the prescribed safe function checks with people clear. Hold a defective machine out of service.

Check the bag-handling position, dust controls, receiving stability and discharge path before loading. Confirm the selected mix and intended batch match the actual machine's instructions.

Identify who performs isolation and its safe verification before cleanup. Record the procedure, inspection findings, checker and time. Confirm how guards and unresolved defects are handed over before reuse.

Stop and reassess

Stop for a missing guard, failed control, abnormal movement, jam, unsafe discharge or failed exposure controls. Keep hands out and do not reach through a grate to fix the problem. Authorized personnel must make the equipment safe, correct the fault and complete required rechecks before restart.

Ask the crew

1. Which guard protects us during charging?
2. Where could the drum or receiving container trap someone?
3. What proves cleanup can begin without restart or movement?

Use the task plan and required specialist decisions before exposure.

Sources: OSHA 1926.300, .702(j), .1153; actual mixer manual.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/mortar-mixer-guarding-loading-cleanup