

My name is Maria Vargas. I was employed by a lumber processor in Prineville when I was injured in 2020. Here's what happened. I was using a radial arm saw to cut wood, but I had only used this type of saw a few times before with help from a supervisor. I told my supervisor that I felt uncomfortable cutting wood with this saw on my own. I told her I couldn't do it. She replied "Go and do it" I attempted to do it but ended up cutting my fingers. The saw made a deep cut in the bones of my ring finger and a shallower cut in the pinky finger. I went to the hospital for temporary stitches and had surgery the following day. I still have pain in that hand and much less mobility now. I reported the accident to Oregon OSHA. OSHA came to investigate a few weeks later. They saw that my employer had added a saw guard since I used it, however OSHA said the saw was still not safe. OSHA also confirmed that I had not been properly trained on the saw. I later learned that OSHA fined my former employer, but not much. It felt good that OSHA came to inspect the machine that injured me, but then to later find out that my employer only had to pay \$780 makes me think the investigation didn't matter too much. I also found out that OSHA reduced the penalty my employer received for not having a saw guard because my employer had less than 40 employees. This makes no sense to me, as OSHA should be trying to send a message to an employer to do a better job protecting their workers, whether they have many or few workers. I also discovered that OSHA had given my employer a violation the year before for not properly training workers, the precise thing that caused my accident. If they had done a better job training me as I had asked, they might not have had the need to amputate and reattach my fingers. Please, pass this bill to hold employers accountable when they repeatedly break the rules, so we can prevent more injuries like mine. Thank you.