

Automation curbs, changes safety risks

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Aaron Holt was quoted in *Business Insurance* discussing the increasing use of automation in the workplace. Aaron said problems with newer technologies concern everyday safety aspects, since automation “takes the human out of the equation,” which could lead to injuries. “If everything continues working as it should, and as it was designed to, then maybe there’s not a problem,” he said. “As we are trying out new technologies, we have to be careful not to trust too much, too quickly in technology that we do not fully appreciate some of the unintended consequences.” He said most companies strive to be safety conscious, while also striving to still be profitable. “That’s always sort of the interplay in making sure you’re doing things safely ... but at the same time you’re wisely spending your resources for the long-term health of the business,” he said. He added “more complicated and expensive” automated machines could potentially lead to more severe worker injuries, but manually controlled machines also account for the bulk of worker injury claims. “There’s a cost to a bunch of little injuries,” he said. “There’s a cost to a big injury. The employer’s still going to be liable for both of those injuries.”

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