



SOUTHWESTERN INDUSTRIES, INC.

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White Paper

Checking RPM Rating on Lathe Chucks

SWI will not sell a customer a chuck from a third party that has a max RPM less than the max RPM of the lathe.

The reason for this is simple. SWI does not want to accept the liability of selling a potentially dangerous chuck. Thank the legal environment of this country.

You may ask, “wait a minute, can’t people kill themselves using our machines with a perfectly rated chuck?” Of course. Someone can get a tie caught in a spindle or cut off a finger while not paying attention. The difference is that as of now, all potentially life-threatening scenarios arise from operators not paying attention. True, a machinist running a lathe at an RPM higher than the max RPM of the chuck is undoubtedly operator error, but it is an error that can occur during regular operation of the machine. Using an unrated chuck, it is possible for the operator to plug in numbers, run a program, watch it, and get seriously hurt. When the old promise of “as long as you keep your fingers out of the way” no longer applies, it creates an enormously more dangerous environment.

Another argument is, “the customer will buy this chuck from someone anyway.” Great! No problem, as long as it’s not from us.

It’s also true that we already have a sticker on the headstock warning operators of using dangerous, unrated chucks, and we could all probably think of a hundred other arguments against this white paper. It doesn’t matter. We’re just not going to do it. No exceptions.

Again, thank the legal environment of this country.