Lockout Tagout for Affected and Authorized Employees



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WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Lockout / Tagout / is series of safety procedures designed to prevent accidents causing serious injuries including fatalities to employees on the unexpected startup of the equipment or energy while servicing.

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

Energy sources including electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, chemical, thermal or other sources in machines and equipment can be hazardous to workers. During the servicing of machines and equipment, the unexpected start up or release of stored energy could cause injury to employees.

Anyone who operates, cleans, services, adjusts, and repairs machinery or equipment should be aware of the hazards associated with that machinery. Failure to lock out or tag power sources on equipment can result in electrocutions, amputations, and other serious-sometimes fatal-accidents.

Some of the causes of accidents:

- The machine or piece of equipment was not completely shut off before a maintenance or repair operation. Not only must the machine be turned off but also the power source that goes to it.
- The machine was turned on accidentally, either out of carelessness or because the person who turned it on did not realize that another worker was there and could get hurt.
- The machine was not working correctly but was not fixed, turned off, locked or tagged, and someone who did not know about the problem used it.

- Moving equipment was not blocked.
- Safety procedures were inadequate or had not been properly explained.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

The Lockout/Tagout standard establishes the employer’s responsibility to protect employees from hazardous energy in machines and equipment during service and maintenance. An initial review should be made to determine which switches, valves, or other energy isolating devices apply to the equipment being locked out since more than one energy source may be involved.

The standards establish requirements that employers must follow when employees are exposed to hazardous energy while servicing and maintaining machinery and equipment. The most critical requirements from these standards are outlined below and also prevent injuries:

- Develop, implement and enforce an energy-control plan.
- Use lockout/tagout devices for equipment that can be locked out. Tagout devices may be used in place of a lockout device only if the tagout program provides employee protection equivalent to that provided through a lockout program.
- Ensure that the new or overhauled equipment is capable of being locked out.
- Develop, implement and ensure an effective tagout program if machinery or equipment are not capable of being locked out.
- Use only lockout/tagout devices authorized for the particular equipment or machinery and ensure that they are durable, standardized and substantial.
- Ensure that the lockout/tagout devices identify the individual users.
- Establish a policy that permits only the employee who applied a lockout/tagout device to remove it.
- Provide effective training for all employees covered by the standard and offer periodic refresher training.
- Comply with the additional energy control provisions under OSHA standards when machines or equipment must be tested or repositioned when outside contractors work at the site, in group lockout situations, and during shift or personnel changes.
- Develop written procedures explaining how a lockout is done.
- Use engineering and administrative controls as much as possible to eliminate the need for lockout.
- Perform regular maintenance to prevent malfunctioning equipment.

Those employees affected by safety procedures of lockout / tagout are:

- Authorized Employee – An employee who manually locks/tags machines or equipment in order to perform servicing or maintenance.
- Affected Employee – An affected employee is one, who is not qualified to lock/tag a piece of equipment which may need maintenance or servicing. An affected employee can also be a person who works in/around an area where the equipment may be locked/tagged out.

FINAL WORD

Be aware of your personal safety and the safety of others when working with or around moving equipment and machinery. Always follow proper lockout and tagout procedures, even for a quick or minor repair!