

LOSS CONTROL TOOL CHEST

Lockout/Tagout (LO/TO) Safety - Is Your Program in Compliance?

Employees are killed or severely injured each year for failing to follow proper lockout or block out procedures prior to working on or repairing equipment. Electrocution, amputation, severe crushing, or being caught in equipment are just some of the injuries associated with failing to lockout or block out the equipment's energy sources. Energy sources can include electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic, or kinetic sources, as well as any combination within a piece of equipment.

While most companies have formal Lockout/Tagout Programs, some efforts may not be in full compliance:

1] Does your lockout/tagout training include affected employees?

If required, could your company produce lockout/tagout training records for employees who operate the equipment but are not authorized to install and remove LO/TO devices or employees who work in an area where there is equipment under LO/TO? While most companies train employees assigned to perform lockout/tagout procedures (known as "authorized" employees), some companies fail to train employees that work with the equipment or work in an area where there is equipment under LO/TO on the basic understanding of the company's lockout/tagout efforts (known as "affected" employees). This is a required element of a LO/TO program.

2] Does your Lockout/Tagout Program separately address each piece of equipment?

Revised in June 2005, formal Lockout/Tagout Programs need to address energy sources for *each* separate piece of equipment mandated by lockout/tagout requirements. Prior to June 2005, companies could have a single Lockout/Tagout Program that covered the workplace. But since June 2005, each piece of equipment that falls under lockout/tagout requirements must to be addressed individually.

3] Does your Lockout/Tagout program list the steps to shut down and secure each piece of equipment?

Each piece of equipment within a lockout/tagout program needs written procedures for securing and testing that the equipment is de-energized prior to any repairs or work performed on it. Procedures for restarting the equipment prior to being placed back into service are also required.

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4] Are employees trained for each piece of equipment they are assigned to work?

Employees must be trained in lockout/tagout efforts prior to working with the equipment. In addition, any employee who is reassigned to a different piece of equipment must be re-trained with documentation. This includes "authorized" and "affected" employees.

5] Do you have a LO/TO system review/inspection in place?

At least annually employers are required to conduct inspections of energy control procedures to determine effectiveness and the need for updating. This must be done by an authorized employee other than the ones installing and removing LO/TO devices. The inspection also includes a review of the "authorized" LO/TO employees understanding of the LO/TO policies and procedures that are in place for the equipment they must work with. Documentation of this inspection must include

- identification of machinery
- date of inspection
- employees included in inspection
- person performing the inspection

Now, with a review of this information, is your Lockout/Tagout Program in compliance? And remember, outside servicing personnel must follow your LO/TO policies and procedures.

Cal/OSHA Publications:

http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/lock2005Eng.pdf (English)

http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/lock2005Span.pdf (Spanish)

Cal/OSHA Sample Program:

http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/lockout.html