Lock Out Tag Out

Any worker who operates, cleans, services, and repairs machinery or equipment must be aware of the hazards associated with that machinery, and they must ensure that the equipment is effectively locked out prior to undertaking any maintenance or repair work. Failure to establish and follow lockout procedures can result in serious injury or death, when people assume that machinery is turned off or made harmless, when it isn't. Part IX of the provincial OHS regulations specifies the requirements De-Energization and Lockout.

What is LOTO?

LOTO is a set of procedures used to ensure that equipment is shut down, inoperable, and de-energized, prior to workers undertaking any maintenance or repair work.

Hazards

Workers performing servicing or maintenance work on machinery or equipment can be seriously injured or killed by electrocution, burns, crushing, cutting, lacerations, amputations, or fractures.

How does LOTO work?

In its simplest form, the following are the basic steps in any lockout procedure:

- all energy sources are identified, disconnected, and placed in the off position;
- each worker involved locks out the energy source with their individual personal lock and key;
- each worker also places a tag on their lock to advise others and to identify who is responsible; and
- prior to beginning work each worker then tries the energy source to ensure it is effectively locked out.

Control Measures

The following are several control measures that you can put in place prior to conducting any maintenance or repair work on equipment or machinery:

- develop lockout procedures and communicate them to applicable workers;
- ensure that workers follow procedures for shutting down equipment and machinery for maintenance;
- identify all energy sources which could cause injury to a worker and ensure that they are isolated and controlled;
- ensure that all machinery and equipment parts and attachments, that can move, are secured prior to performing and maintenance work;
- ensure that locks are used to secure energy isolating devices and that workers have enough keyed locks to complete the lockout;
- ensure that personal locks are marked, labelled or tagged to identify the person applying it, the equipment being locked out, and the date the lock was applied;
- develop and follow procedures for the transfer of the lockout between personnel changes;
- ensure that locks do not obstruct access to other energy isolating devices that could pose a hazard to workers; and
- verify that the lockout is completed before work begins.