



## Lockout / Tagout Program

Machinery, equipment, and processes can be powered by one or more of many different energy sources including electricity, coiled springs, compressed air, steam, pressurized water, hydraulics, combustion, or even gravity. Lockout/Tagout—or LOTO—programs describe how to identify and control all sources of energy that can pose a hazard to you and your co-workers. Any time and every time you need to do maintenance on machines or equipment, clear jams, remove guards, disable safety devices, or change bites and cutters, you have to follow LOTO procedures.

The LOTO program has detailed descriptions and procedures designed to help you identify and isolate power sources. The goal is to prevent the unexpected release of energy or movement of parts. This prevents re-energizing by blocking parts and preventing movement. Using the LOTO program effectively will save lives and prevents injuries.

In some cases, you'll use a lockout device to keep a breaker from being turned on. You may need to block a part to physically prevent it from moving—like using a jack stand to support a car instead of relying on the jack itself. Other times you may need to block a line by closing and locking a valve or inserting a blank in the line; then you'll have to bleed off residual pressure in the part of the system you're working on. Whatever the case, make sure that you lock out at the energy source. Locking out at the control switch may not be good enough to keep you safe. For instance, you should never lock out an electrical circuit at a light switch; you should lock it out at the breaker.

Remember that there should be one lock and one key per worker. Never give your assigned key to another person. Everyone working on the machine, system, circuit, etc., should apply his own lock. Always remember that locks and tags don't de-energize machinery or equipment—people do!

When you need to conduct maintenance or repairs on any machinery, you need to think, plan, and check:

- If you are in charge of locking or tagging out machinery or equipment, think through the entire procedure. Identify all parts of any system that need to be shut down. Determine what switches, equipment, and people will be involved.
- Check voltage on all circuits. Check pressure on all gauges and fluid lines. Notify all affected employees that the machinery, equipment, or process will be out of service.
- Carefully plan how restarting will take place. Inspect the area before removing any locks. If there is a shift change before machinery can be restored to service,



locks and tags from the next shift must be installed or the locks and tags from the prior shift must remain in place along with their owners.

### **SAFETY REMINDER**

**Follow lockout/tagout procedures consistently. Don't be tempted to take shortcuts for small jobs, even if the LOTO procedures take longer than the job itself!**