

Toolbox Talks 2

037: Unsafe Acts: Lockout/Tagout

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Review your company's Lockout/Tagout procedures.

What this Safety Talk covers:

Most injuries occur not due to unsafe conditions, but due to unsafe acts. This Safety Talk addresses unsafe acts in regard to lockout/tagout.

Discussion notes:

Some unsafe acts in lockout/tagout

- Conducting a partial lockout/tagout. Isolating the power to the motor without isolating the power to the controls, or vice-versa, is an incomplete lockout/tagout that puts you and others at risk.
- Locking out one energy source and thinking you've got them all. Not all energy sources are obvious. In addition to looking at the drawings for all electrical energy sources, look for the non-electrical ones. These include mechanical (springs), hydraulic (fluids under pressure), pneumatic (air systems), chemical, and thermal. You may need to install wooden blocks or other devices. Walk the system down thoroughly before concluding it's safe to work on or around.
- Taking an "I've seen it before" attitude. The lockout/tagout procedures used on this job may differ from what you've seen. Review each line of the procedures and forms to see what's required. Ask your foreman to clarify anything that isn't clear.
- Relying on lockout/tagout only. You may de-energize the equipment you're working on, only to be injured by nearby equipment that isn't de-energized.
- Working under someone else's lock or tag. If more than one person will be working on the equipment, each person should have his or her own lock applied. Use a multilock hasp if needed. Each lock should have a tag identifying the owner of the lock.
- Removing someone else's lock or tag. Never remove a lock that does not belong to you. If you cannot locate the owner of a lock, or a lock has no tag with it, report this to your foreman. Management will have to locate and contact this person.
- Leaving your lock or tag on at the end of your shift. This can prevent another crew from working. Possible outcomes include cutting the lock and working in a hurry to make up for lost time—both of which may pose serious hazards.
- Using makeshift lockout/tagout items rather than using the lockout/tagout materials called for in your lockout/tagout program.
- Violating any part of the lockout/tagout program. Know and practice the requirements. Deliberate violations may lead to civil and criminal penalties. Violations may result in legal charges against you and reduced workman's compensation.

Review and discussion

1. What is a partial lockout/tagout?
2. Give some examples from this job where a partial lockout/tagout is possible.
3. What are some energy sources other than electrical that you must look for?
4. How can you determine what energy sources are present in the equipment you will be working on?

6. If you follow proper lockout/tagout, is the equipment safe to work on? Why or why not?

8. Why should you remove your locks and tags at the end of your shift?

10. What are some things we can say about violating any part of the lockout/tagout program? [Note to presenter: Mistakes do happen, and lockout/tagout can sometimes be a complex endeavor. If a coworker overlooks something, the right thing to do is bring it to his or her attention so a correction can be made. If someone points out a mistake or oversight you made, be thankful. Never be shy about asking your foreman or another crew member to walk through what you did and look for mistakes. If you detect disregard for the lockout/tagout program, don't argue with the person. Report anyone who violates the program, either deliberately or out of carelessness. Anyone who is not committed to the lockout/tagout program clearly does not care about you or your coworkers. The best thing you can do for that person and for others on the job is to discuss with your foreman what is going on. Don't let unsafe attitudes slide, in the hopes they will get better. They won't.]

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