

Fundamental safety and health principles behind the lockout tagout standard



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Fundamental Safety and Health Principles behind the Lockout Tagout Standard

This is a fundamental safety standard that offers guidelines encompassing injuries caused by unexpected energization of machinery and equipment in the course of maintenance activities. This standard gives minimum operational requirements in order to curb such injuries or release of this energy. It is important however to mention that the standard circumvents certain issues like employees in construction sites, agricultural entities or in maritime duties (OSHA, 2011). It does not also cover injuries resulting from electric utilities that are meant to generate, transmit or distribute power. It also circumvents oil and gas well services.

The standard stipulates that employers are supposed to prevent energization of machines using lockout and tagout devices together with energy isolating mechanisms. Such mechanisms are expected to be appropriate enough as to control energization of machines mostly on start up which hugely prevents occurrences of injuries to company workers. Employees are also required to be thoroughly trained on how to handle such equipments in lockout and tagout instances. Inspections should also be done every time maintenance is to be carried out to ensure that such a machine has been isolated completely from the power source to prevent chances of stored energy release which in turn prevents injuries (OSHA, 2011). In case new machines are being installed then the installation should be accompanied by affixing devices to it that enable lockout.

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Employees left with the mandate to repair machines or equipment also have the mandate of performing lockout and tagout and the employer should have given prior notice to do such operations. In case lockout and tagout devices are to be temporarily out of operation, employees should be informed appropriately to prevent accidents and consequently, injuries.

References

OSHA (2011). The control of hazardous energy (lockout/tagout). Retrieved 10 Jan. 2011 from, http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&d=9804