

TOOLBOX TALK: LOCKOUT AND TAGOUT

Job or site _____

Date _____

Led by _____

Open with this

Whose lock is on what right now? If anybody is working on something that can be switched on by somebody else, we are stopping until there is a lock on it with a name on it.

The talk

The basic idea is simple. Anything that can start moving, energize, heat up or release pressure while you have your hands in it must be isolated, locked, tagged and verified dead before you start.

The lock is yours and the key is in your pocket. Not the foreman's lock, not a shared lock in the gang box, not a tag on its own. If three people are working on the same equipment, three locks go on, and the last one off is the last person out.

A tag without a lock only works where the isolating device cannot physically accept a lock, and then the tag has to be substantial, attached at the point of control and treated as if it were a lock. In practice, if it can take a lock, it takes a lock.

Stored energy is what catches people. The breaker is off but there is a capacitor still charged, air still in the line, a spring still loaded, a suspended part that drops when the hydraulics bleed off, or water still in a system at pressure. Release it, block it, bleed it or restrain it before you trust it.

Then verify. Try to start it. Put the meter on it. Bleed the line and watch the gauge go to zero. Verification is the step that separates lockout from hope, and it is the step people skip because they are already sure.

Getting it back on is the other half. Tools out, guards back on, everybody clear and told, then locks come off in order by the people who put them on. Nobody removes somebody else's lock. Not the foreman, not the owner, nobody, except under a documented procedure with the person accounted for.

Point at these before anybody starts

- The disconnect or breaker for each piece of equipment being worked on today
- Whose lock and tag is on it, with a name that can be read from six feet away
- Any stored energy: air receivers, hydraulic rams, springs, capacitors, raised loads

- The verification step, done in front of everybody, not described
- Where the locks and tags are kept, and whether there are enough for everyone
- Who is responsible for the startup sequence when the work is finished

The rules that apply

- Every person working on the equipment applies their own lock and keeps their own key.
- Isolate every energy source, not just the obvious one. Electrical, pneumatic, hydraulic, mechanical, thermal and gravity all count.
- Release or restrain stored energy before work begins, then verify zero energy by attempting to operate the controls or by testing.
- Tags without locks are only for isolating devices that cannot be locked, and they must be attached at the point of control.
- Nobody removes another person's lock. Restoring power follows a set sequence with everybody accounted for and clear.
- Tell anybody working nearby before you re energize, every time, out loud.

Ask the crew

- Who is going to have their hands inside something today that can move or energize?
- What is the second energy source on that machine, the one that is not the breaker?
- When we put power back on this afternoon, who says it is clear and how do they know?

Close with this

Your lock, your key, your hands. Verify it is dead before you touch it, and tell everyone before it comes back on.

Attendance

Everybody who was present signs, including subcontractors and anybody visiting the site.

	Print name and signature
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This talk is general safety information for a crew briefing, not legal advice and not a substitute for the training your employees are required to have. Standards are quoted for orientation only. Check the current text of the standard and your own state plan, which may be stricter than the federal rule.