



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Protect your colleagues

Remember to lockout and tag when energy sources are off

In March 2007, an employee of Cintas Corp., the largest uniform supplier in North America, was clearing a jam of clothing in an industrial dryer when he fell in and was killed.

After investigating, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration exposed multiple violations of its lockout/tagout standards. OSHA concluded that had the proper precautions been implemented, the worker would not have died.

OSHA issued nearly 4,000 citations to companies in 2007 for lockout/tagout violations, making it the fifth most common workplace safety problem. The agency's standards require that workers disable and isolate equipment and machinery from hazardous energy sources, when maintenance and service are undertaken.

"Workers forget the most important step, isolating the source of energy," said Gerry Coley, SCF Arizona loss control specialist. "Removing the source of energy and then locking and tagging it, is the only sure way of protecting yourself."

To comply with lockout/tagout standards OSHA requires that companies:

- Develop, implement and enforce an energy-control program.
- Use locks or other devices to secure equipment that can be shut down. Tags may be used to alert workers only if the tagout program provides protection that is equal to a lockout program.
- Ensure that new or overhauled equipment can be locked out.
- Develop, implement and enforce an effective tagout program if machines or equipment are not capable of being locked out.
- Develop, document, implement and enforce energy-control procedures.
- Use lockout/tagout devices that are authorized for the specific equipment or machinery and be sure they are durable, standardized and substantial.
- Ensure that lockout/tagout devices identify the individual who attached them.
- Establish a policy that requires that the employee who applied a lockout/tagout device be the only person who is permitted to remove it.
- Inspect energy-control procedures annually.

- Provide training for all employees the standard covers.
- Comply with the “additional energy control provisions” in OSHA standards, when the machines or equipment must be tested or repositioned; when outside contractors work at the site; in group lockout situations; and during shift or personnel changes.

Coley’s colleague Stephanie Steinberger said, “We ask our policyholders that repair their own equipment if they have written lockout/tagout procedures. If the answer is no, we help them find training, programs and written procedures.”

She said the best use of a lockout/tagout procedure that she ever saw was at an airbag manufacturer.

“Every machine that they work on has the instructions clearly posted, and they are required to follow the procedures,” Steinberger said. “They have signs posted everywhere that state, ‘If you don’t understand it, don’t do it. Ask for help.’”

For a brochure on lockout/tagout standards, go to SCF Arizona’s website, scfaz.com, or call 602.631.2809. Policyholders that wish to arrange a meeting with an SCF Loss Control Consultant to discuss the standards can call 602.631.2000.

SCF Arizona is the state’s largest provider of workers’ compensation insurance, providing coverage to more than 57,000 policyholders. It also is a major advocate of workplace safety, sponsoring five Safety Works Expos statewide each year.

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