

Lockout Tagout - Affected Employee

Lockout tagout is an important and vital procedure for any workplace that houses and utilizes machinery, it's also required by OSHA in its standard on Control of Hazardous Energy. Since approximately 120 fatalities and 50,000 injuries occur every year due to improper implementation of lockout tagout procedures, it's very important all employees are properly trained and prepared.

What is Lockout Tagout?

With approximately 3 million employees exposed to machine hazards and the release of hazardous energy when they service machinery, lockout tagout procedures ensure that they are protected when they do their job. The following are the meanings of "lockout" and "tagout":

- Lockout - Ensures machinery cannot be physically operated and hazardous energy cannot be released during servicing by using a lock and other approved lockout devices.
- Tagout - Ensures that the servicing of machinery is clearly communicated to all employees. Tagout devices are for warning purposes only; they do not control hazardous energy.

Types of Employees Involved:

When machinery is being serviced in a workplace, all employees in the workplace are at risk of being exposed to machine hazards and the release of hazardous energy. The following employees must be trained in lockout tagout procedures:

- Authorized Employees - Those who service and maintain machinery/equipment.
- Affected Employees - Those who operate machinery, but do not service them. (If they do both, then they would need to be an Authorized Employee.)
- Other Employees - Those who do not service or operate machinery, but who work nearby and need to know about hazardous energy control procedures in order to protect themselves.

Responsibilities of an Affected Employee:

As an Affected Employee, the employee has three main responsibilities when machinery is being serviced in a workplace, these responsibilities are:

- They must be trained on the purpose and use of hazardous energy control procedures. This is to ensure that an employee does not inadvertently energize machinery/equipment when it's locked out or tagged out.
- They must be trained on what to do if machinery is inadvertently energized as an emergency procedure.
- They must steer clear of all machinery being serviced. They avoid the lockout devices, tagout devices, and the machinery as a whole until the Authorized Employee notifies them that all lockout or tagout devices have been removed and the equipment has been restarted.

Other Key Points to Remember:

- Affected Employees are NOT able to assist in lockout tagout, even if an Authorized Employee is overseeing the procedures.
- When lockout tagout procedures are performed, Affected Employees are to follow all instructions from Authorized Employees and avoid the area where the machinery is being serviced.
- Affected Employees should never remove or defeat any lockout or tagout devices, or any other safeguards on the machinery.