Self-Inspection Checklist Items: Lockout/Tagout

Lockout/tagout (LOTO) is a work practice used to control hazardous energy in machines or equipment during maintenance activities. It involves applying locks and tags at designated energy isolation points. The lock prevents the unexpected startup of machinery or the release of energy while performing maintenance. The tag indicates who applied the lock or tag and when it was applied. Together, the lock isolates energy and the tag alerts employees LOTO is occurring and informs them not to operate the machine or equipment. This one pager reviews LOTO related items you can add to your self-inspection checklists to identify deficiencies in your organization.

Image retrieved from Bing Images (Creative Commons)

GENERAL LOCKOUT/TAGOUT INFORMATION

Your self-inspection process should involve employee discussions and interviews. Add items to your checklists to ask employees if they are aware of your site's LOTO program, if they are *affected* or *authorized* employees in terms of LOTO, and if they understand only trained, authorized employees can apply and remove LOTO equipment. Add questions to your checklist based on who completes the inspection (i.e., ask a safety officer or supervisor more detailed questions compared to an employee unfamiliar with LOTO).

ENERGY CONTROL PROCEDURES

Your organization is responsible for developing and using energy control procedures (ECPs). ECPs are machine-specific procedures employees follow to apply LOTO and isolate energy sources. Many organizations post ECPs directly on machines or place them in easily accessible binders. Add these items to your checklists, as well:

✓ Verify all equipment or machine requiring an ECP have one posted on the machine or in the binder

✓ Look for consistency in the placement of ECPs – if procedures hang from machines, confirm the procedure matches the equipment make and model

✓ Look at the dates on the ECPs to see if annual reviews or periodic inspections are past due

✓ Review a few procedures to make sure proper completion of all required sections:

Scope	Purpose	Authorization	Rules	Techniques to Control Hazardous Energy

Specific Statement of the Intended Use of the Procedure	Steps Related to Shut Down, Isolation, Blocking, Securing Against Hazardous Energy	Steps Related to Replacement, Removal, Transfer of LOTO	Specific Requirements for Testing to Determine Effectiveness of LOTO Devices

SMCX
DoD Safety Management Center of Excellence

LOCKS

Your organization must standardize the locks you use for LOTO. Standardization means locks are alike in color, shape, or size throughout all work areas (i.e., *not an ordinary metal lock an employee could bring from anywhere)*. Many organizations issue individual LOTO locks to each authorized employee or mark LOTO locks with a specific color or number to track their application in the workplace. Consider adding these items to your self-inspection checklists:

✓ Look at applied locks and confirm they are the organization's standardized LOTO lock

✓ Make sure locks are locked, giving the lock a tug to ensure they cannot be easily removed

✓ See if the key remains in the lock while on equipment (*allowing anyone to remove the lock*).

TAGS

LOTO tags provide instructions informing employees to not energize or use the machine. Like locks, you must also standardize the tags you use for LOTO, having consistent print, format, and statements like "Do Not Start" or "Do Not Energize" (*not "Out of Service"*). You might find tags utilized by themselves when the use of a lock is not possible. ECPs explain when to use locks and tags, including when to use tags by themselves. Consider adding these items to your self-inspection checklists:

✓ Spot-check a few tags and verify all tag information is complete and readable

✓ Make sure applied tags are organization-specific and all tags are standardized

✓ Check if the tag is made of a material capable of withstanding the work environment, including the weather, if applied outdoors (i.e., not using paper tags outdoors or in wet environments)

✓ Give the tag a firm tug to ensure you cannot easily remove it

✓ Confirm there is one tag provided for each lock.

LOCKOUT/TAGOUT STATIONS AND LOG BOOKS

LOTO stations and log books are common when an organization does not issue LOTO locks specifically to authorized employees. Regulation does not require LOTO stations and log books, but your Service, headquarters, or organization may use or require them. Consider adding these items to your self-inspection checklists:

Image retrieved from Bing Images (Creative Commons)

✓ Review log book entries to verify LOTO devices missing from the LOTO station are documented in the book

✓ Evaluate log book entries for completeness, making sure all information is filled out for each entry

✓ Question any log entries not checked in for an extended period of time (e.g., lock and tag checked out in January but not checked in as of March).

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: https://www.smscx.org/.