

## Lockout/Tagout Safety

One of the hazards too often overlooked is associated with stored or potential hazardous energy. OSHA's Control of Hazardous Energy safety procedures are referred to as Lockout Tagout.

Unfortunately, many workers get confused about lockout tagout because they don't think it applies to them. This might be because they think that lockout tagout is just for electrical work – and that is a grave mistake.



All workers could be exposed to the dangers of hazardous energy. Workers need to be familiar with how lockout tagout could affect them, how to recognize when lockout tagout is needed or is in place, and what is required before doing any job that requires lockout tagout.

*OSHA Standard 1926.417 Controls that are to be deactivated during the course of work on energized or deenergized equipment or circuits shall be tagged. Equipment or circuits that are deenergized shall be rendered inoperative and shall have tags attached at all points where such equipment or circuits can be energized. Tags shall be placed to identify plainly the equipment or circuits being worked on.*

**Lockout** refers to the act of placing a physical barrier, such as a lock, cover or chain, which prevents a machine or equipment component from being turned on or activated.

**Tagout** is the application of a label or tag placed near the lockout that alerts others to the lockout status of the equipment.

**Lockout and Tagout should always be used together to maximize safety.**

Part of understanding lockout tagout is to recognize the types of hazardous energy that a worker may be exposed to on the job. Types of hazardous energy include:

- Chemical – such as chemicals stored in pipes, tanks, and/or held under pressure.
- Pneumatic – trash compactors, compressors, lifting equipment.
- Thermal – extreme heat from heating elements or furnaces or cold energy from refrigeration units or compressed gases.
- Electric – electrical equipment which is either wired or operated by cord and plug.
- Mechanical – stored energy in rotating or moving parts or conveyor belts.
- Other – such as x-ray, radiation, laser, microwave, radio frequency, or others.

Lockout tagout may be required with all types of work and tasks such as:

- Plumbing
- Servicing
- Maintenance
- Cleaning
- Lubrication
- Setting up
- Making repairs

