



# THE SAFETY BUZZ

December 2017

## Lockout/Tagout: Controlling Hazardous Energy

Lockout/Tagout procedures are used to control hazardous energy when making repairs or adjustments to machinery or other types of equipment.

### Types of Hazardous Energy:

Electrical  
Thermal  
Pneumatic  
Chemical  
Stored  
Gravitational  
Hydraulic  
Motion

### Risk of not properly utilizing a Lockout/Tagout program:

Chemical Exposure  
Burns  
Amputations  
Crushed by/between  
Fractures

### Procedures for Locking out equipment:

1. Make sure all affected employees are notified.
2. Run through normal shutdown procedures.
3. Place all controls in the off position and close all control valves.
4. Install Lockout/Tagout devices and tags.
5. Release stored energy.
6. Verify energy is isolated.

### Restart/Release from Lockout/Tagout:

1. Inspect the work area: sweep the area for parts, tools, and missing guards. Make sure the equipment is ready to operate.
2. Keep others safe: ensure that everyone is clear of the machinery and is aware of the restart.
3. Remove locks and tags: each Lockout/Tagout device must be removed by the authorized person who placed the device there.

### Three Rules for Lockout/Tagout:

1. Have a working knowledge of the equipment you are repairing or maintaining.
2. Ensure that everyone involved knows the energy source.
3. Use Lockout/Tagout procedures EVERY TIME!

Lockout/Tagout procedures are an important part of your company's maintenance procedures. Working on equipment without utilizing the proper

procedures can lead to serious injuries or fatalities. An absence of a Lockout/Tagout program can also lead to OSHA citations.

For more information regarding implementing a Lockout/Tagout program or maintaining your current program, visit the AlaCOMP Online Safety Library at [www.alacompins.com/safety](http://www.alacompins.com/safety) and visit the Lockout/Tagout index.

## SEASONAL SAFETY

### Winter Safety Tips:

Although employers cannot control roadway conditions, they can promote safe driving behavior by ensuring workers recognize the hazards of winter weather driving:

- Set and enforce driver safety policies
- Implement an effective maintenance program for all vehicles and mechanized equipment that workers are required to operate.
- Have properly trained workers inspect the vehicle systems to determine if they are working properly.

One thing many workers fail to consider when dealing with cold weather is the windchill factor. 80% of a worker's body heat that is lost on cold days is due to the windchill so the trick is to understand how the windchill is affecting what it really feels like outside, not just what the temperature indicates. For example, 34 degrees Fahrenheit outside with no windchill feels MUCH different than 34 degrees with a 25mph wind. The wind blows away the thin layer of air above the skin that usually protects workers, creating a much colder environment. So, to protect against the elements, here are some options:

- Provide high insulation clothing
- Allow moisture to escape from inside of the clothing
- Resist moisture from getting in from the outside
- Be unrestrictive to movement
- Have minimal bulk and weight
- Be easy to put on and take off
- Be durable

The following clothing is recommended for workers who will be working briefly or for extended periods of time in the cold this winter.

- Underwear: Thermal underwear should be worn with cotton shirt and shorts underneath.
- Pants: Lined thermal type pants; wool and quilted pants are recommended. Pants should provide room and should be worn with suspenders, not a belt. Belts constrict circulation.
- Shirts: Wool shirts are best for cold weather. They should be worn over underwear tops and suspenders with the shirttail worn outside of the pants to help ventilation. If you are allergic to wool, you can wear a cotton or synthetic shirt.
- Socks: Socks should assist in the evaporation of sweat without restricting circulation. The best socks for this are high wool socks. Avoid stretchy socks if you can since they limit circulation.
- Boots: Any and all footwear should be waterproof and reach high up the leg.

The most strongly recommended boots are rubber bottomed, felt lined, and leather toppers with removable insoles.

- **Face Masks:** Face masks may limit or impair vision and need to be removed on a constant basis to check for frostbite.
- **Head Covers:** Hat liners or wool knit caps that extend down the back of the neck are the best choice. However, a ski mask or balaclava, will offer even more protection against the cold.
- **Mittens and Gloves:** For full protection from the cold, mittens are recommended. However, you will want to carry both mittens and gloves so you can put the gloves on when you need more dexterity when moving your fingers.

**How to PROTECT WORKERS in cold environment**

- Recognize the environmental and workplace conditions that lead to potential cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of cold-induced illnesses/injuries and what to do to help the worker.
- Train the workforce about cold-induced illnesses and injuries.
- Select proper clothing for cold, wet, and windy conditions. Layer clothing to adjust to changing environmental temperatures. Wear a hat and gloves, in addition to underwear that will keep water away from the skin (polypropylene).
- Take frequent short breaks in warm dry shelters to allow the body to warm up.
- Perform work during the warmest part of the day.
- Avoid exhaustion or fatigue because energy is needed to keep muscles warm.
- Use the buddy system (work in pairs).
- Drink warm, sweet beverages (sugar water, sports-type drinks). Avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, or hot chocolate) or alcohol.
- Eat warm, high-calorie foods like hot pasta dishes.

**Workers are at increased risk when...**

- ⚠ They have predisposing health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and hypertension.
- ⚠ They take certain medication (check with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacy and ask if any medicines you are taking affect you while working in cold environments).
- ⚠ They are in poor physical condition, have a poor diet, or are older.

*Illustration: A worker in a blue protective suit and hood stands in a snowy environment, holding a shovel.*

Sometimes, just the fact that your hands and fingers are cold and have less grip and dexterity could lead to disastrous consequences. When you can't feel your hands or fingers, it becomes much harder to grip and handle tools, materials or other equipment. This can lead to accidents that could injure or kill someone, simply because someone lost their grip on their tools or they couldn't handle them correctly. Cold weather also tends to affect the moods of workers. It is natural to feel the winter blues once the cold weather sets in, especially if it's been cold for a considerable amount of time. When workers become irritated or grumpy while working, this can also lead to accidents due to workers rushing to get jobs done so they can get inside and warm up again. They can also forget about, or become less aware, of the hazards around them.

For more information please visit our [SAFETY LIBRARY](#) or contact:  
Jim Hallford: 334-300-6346 or [jim@alacompins.com](mailto:jim@alacompins.com)  
Scott Hunter: 256-794-9591 or [scott@alacompins.com](mailto:scott@alacompins.com)

TELL US WHAT ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT...  
[EMAIL KELLY](#)

