

OSHA Training Toolbox Talk: OSHA's Lockout/Tagout Standard - Testing and Repositioning

[Reference 1910.147(e)]

On occasion, it may become necessary to temporarily re-energize a piece of equipment or machinery that is locked and tagged out so we can perform some sort of test, or to reposition machine components, before further work can be performed. But do not simply remove your locks and fire up the equipment without first following some basic precautions because someone could be injured. Today, we will recap the steps required by OSHA to be followed when testing or repositioning equipment or machinery that has been locked out for service or maintenance.

The first step is to clear the work area of any tools or other objects that may create a hazard when the equipment is restarted. A tool or piece of materials lying on top of a pulley or other moving part could become a dangerous flying projectile when the equipment is restarted.

The next step is to make sure all employees have been removed from the hazardous areas around the machine. Not just those right next to you, but anyone who may have crawled behind or under the equipment to clean up or perform other work while it is shut down (reminder: even cleaning up near equipment or machinery that could be unexpected energized or started should only be done by an authorized employee who has attached a personal lockout device to energy isolation devices).

Then authorized employees can remove their personal lockout devices from the energy isolation devices, and reenergize the equipment or machinery to perform the necessary testing or repositioning. We must make certain, however, to employ all necessary effective employee protection, such as temporarily reinstalling guards or maintaining a safe distance, while this part of the work is being done.

Once we are finished testing or repositioning the equipment or machinery, we must de-energize the equipment or machinery if further service or maintenance work is to be performed, and then isolate the equipment or machinery from all hazardous energy sources. Then, dissipate or retrain any residual energy, reapply your lockout devices, and confirm energy isolation.

Additional information about specific steps we must take to safely perform testing or repositioning of equipment and machinery is available in our written machine-specific lockout/tagout procedures. Questions or requests for clarification about these procedures should be directed to your supervisor or safety manager.

Does anybody have a question or comment about these general requirements to be followed when we test or reposition equipment or machinery that has been locked out? Please be sure to sign your name to the training certification form so you get credit for attending this training session.

