

**Farm Bureau
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LOCKOUT/TAGOUT: The only sure way to make equipment repairs safely

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sandy, UT – When it’s time to perform maintenance, repairs or machine set-up, simply unplugging or switching off equipment is not enough. Many serious accidents happen when someone thinks a machine or electricity is safely “off.” “Lockout/Tagout” is the sure way to protect workers.

Use the following procedures when tractors and equipment receive regular maintenance and servicing. These procedures also cover service and maintenance that take place during normal operation when an employee needs to:

- Remove or bypass a guard or other safety device.
- Move into the area on equipment where the machine comes in contact with product it is working with.
- Come into contact or close to dangerous moving parts of tractor, implement or piece of machinery.

Make sure “OFF” stays “OFF”

Lockout/Tagout ensures that machines and electricity remain temporarily “OFF.” Without this procedure, there is always the possibility that a machine could suddenly start up. That’s when someone could be cut, hit or crushed. Other hazards might include the danger of electrocution or release of toxic chemicals.

To prevent start-ups, it is important to identify a machine’s power source — electricity, stored electricity (such as in a capacitor), stored pressure (such as compressed air), or stored mechanical energy (such as in a coiled spring).

Lockout/Tagout procedures

Make sure that workers and family members always follow these seven steps:

1. Think, plan and check. If you are in charge, think through the entire procedure. Identify all parts of any system(s) that need to be shut down. Determine which switches, equipment and people will be involved. Carefully plan how restarting will take place.
2. Communicate. Let all those who need to know that a Lockout/Tagout is taking place.
3. Identify all appropriate power sources, whether near or far from the job site. Include electrical circuits, hydraulic and pneumatic systems, spring energy and gravity systems.
4. Neutralize all appropriate power at the source. Disconnect electricity. Block moveable parts. Release or block spring energy. Drain or bleed hydraulic and pneumatic lines. Lower suspended parts to rest positions.
5. Lockout all power sources. Each worker should have a personal lock, labeled with his/her name. Clips, chains and lockout boxes can also be used.
6. Tagout all power sources and machines. Tag information should include the reason for lockout, your name, how to reach you and the date and time of tagging. Tag machine controls, pressure lines, starter switches and suspended parts.
7. Do a complete test. Double-check all of the above steps. Conduct a personal test. Push start buttons, test circuits and operate valves to confirm lockout.

Restarting

After completion of maintenance work or set-up operations, workers must follow safety procedures you establish for start-up and only when all workers are safely out of the way and equipment is ready should power be activated.

Training

Operators and employees need to understand the purpose and function of the Lockout/Tagout and how to safely use and remove locks and warning tags.

This procedure can apply to all farm tractors, implements and other machinery. Just think how many times have you or someone you know been working on an implement and the ignition key to the tractor has been left in the switch? How many times have you gotten off of the tractor and left it running without using proper parking or braking procedures? Everyone has the need to develop better safety habits and eliminate as many hazardous situations as they can.

There are many farmers that would still have all of their fingers and hands if only they had used a Lockout/Tagout procedure.

Please give serious consideration to implementing this procedure on your farm or ranch. This is a smart way to protect yourself and those that you love around the equipment used on your operation.

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