By the Numbers: Seven Statistics on Lockout/Tagout

Lockout /tagout is an important safety measure to ensure that equipment does not become activated during repair or maintenance procedures. Here are seven statistics relating to lockout/tagout.

Lockout/tagout is a safety procedure performed by trained and authorized workers to ensure that machinery and energy sources capable of causing injury or death are properly shut down and rendered incapable of unexpectedly restarting until maintenance or repair work is completed and the lock and tag are removed by the person who placed them there. Here are seven statistics relating to lockout/tagout:

1. Lockout/tagout procedures apply in these four circumstances: When workers are servicing or maintaining equipment and unexpected startup of a machine or the release of stored energy could occur; when during normal production, workers must remove or bypass a guard or safety device; when during normal production, workers place any parts of their bodies into the danger zone or the machine’s point of operation; and during all set-up activities. (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH))
2. Up to 10 percent of industrial incidents are believed to be related to failure to properly lock out equipment. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
3. Lockout/tagout procedures prevent an estimated 120 worker fatalities and 50,000 injuries each year in the United States. (OSHA)
4. Lockout/tagout protects workers from serious or fatal physical hazards, including these six examples: shock/electrocution; amputations; pinching injuries; crushing injuries; cuts; and burns.
5. Seven forms of hazardous energy found in workplaces include: electrical; thermal; chemical; hydraulic; pneumatic; mechanical; and gravitational.

6. Six important lockout/tagout procedures include notifying all affected workers; machine shutdown and hazardous energy isolation; application of lockout/tagout; verification of isolation; lockout/tagout interruption for testing or repositioning; and release from lockout/tagout. (Health & Safety Ontario)
7. Three examples of energy-isolating devices are valves, circuit breakers and disconnect switches. During lockout, the main power source for the machinery or equipment must be disconnected and locked out at all times. (WorkSafeBC)