Hazardous Energy Kills

Hazardous energy conditions can appear during installation, maintenance and other types of work. The energy can be mechanical, electrical, thermal or potential. Here are a few examples of workers being killed instantly by hazardous energy:

- A worker was cleaning out a feed mixer without shutting it off and locking it out. He fell through an opening in the top and died instantly from injuries.
- A power lineman was disconnecting a temporary power line from a terminal. Procedures to ensure the lines were de-energized had not been followed. When he touched the bare end of the wire he was electrocuted.
- A worker inflating a tire applied too much air and the tire exploded, fatally striking him in the forehead.

Be aware of the need to identify and label all hazardous energy sources, and to de-energize, block, isolate and/or dissipate all such energy before work begins. Lockout/tagout procedures must always be followed, and the de-energizing tested before starting work. Inspect repairs before re-activating, and make sure everyone is clear of danger points before re-energizing a system.