



A lock and key could save a life

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There's more to our industry than driving trucks, but keeping those trucks moving is key to the industry. The entire industry is grounded in supporting professions that make a driver's job possible. From service technicians and dispatchers to forklift operators and truck and trailer technicians, trucking just isn't possible without these people. As such, their safety on the job should be the top priority for any industry leader. An injury to a mechanic means an injury for the entire fleet.

One of the most important steps that can be taken by employers to help ensure the safety of these workers is through the implementation of what's called a lockout - tagout system. You may be surprised to learn that this system may be implemented in your own workplace already; you just have a different name for it. It's a surprisingly simple method of ensuring that those working with dangerous machines won't be hurt when in a vulnerable position.

This system (which in some cases is required by law to be implemented) consists of a series of procedures put in place whenever a certain task is done to prevent the unexpected expulsion of built-up energy (when something starts moving when it shouldn't). But how do we prevent that? The lockout - tagout system is designed to stop these incidents before they have a chance to start. The system consists of two parts, lockouts and tagouts.

Lockouts encompass a series of devices that place physical barriers on the ability of energy to be released. Often this means placing physical locking devices on equipment to make sure they aren't used. However, this isn't always the case, as a lockout could be anything that renders a machine inoperative and prevents the release of energy. Here's what this could look like:

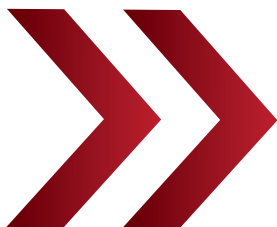
A driver has forgotten to put on the parking brake. However, the driver did put wheel chocks on the tires around the vehicle. Due to this, the vehicle stops when it begins to roll unexpectedly, preventing the driver from being crushed during a pre-trip inspection.



Tagouts are an equally important part of the lockout-tagout system. They are tags, marks, or other identifying signs that indicate that whatever it is affixed to cannot be operated or powered on. Again, let's see what this would look like using an example:

A mechanic is doing work on the underside of a truck. A yard attendant enters the truck with the intention of driving it into the yard but stops after seeing a large cover on the steering wheel. This is a clear indication not to start the vehicle, which stops the yard attendant from injuring the mechanic.

These two instances have demonstrated the use of lockouts and tagouts separately. However, in many situations, simply implementing one aspect of the system isn't sufficient. Provincially, whenever a lockout with a key is used, a tagout has to accompany it under the law (section 16.16 of the Manitoba Safety and Health Regulations). This is considered best practice, provincially or federally, as lockouts are most effective when a clearly visible tagout accompanies it.



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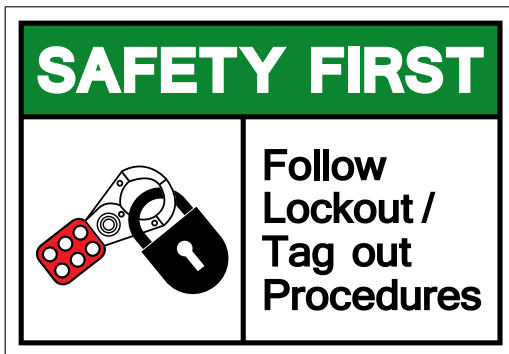
Address: 25 Bunting Street Winnipeg, MB R2X 2P5

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As we'll see in our final example, when lockouts and tagouts are combined to create a true **lockout-tagout system**, they have the potential to stop catastrophic incidents from occurring.

A forklift operator is performing a cross dock. A driver is about to pull the trailer away while the operator is inside, potentially causing life threatening injuries. The driver stops because a lock has been placed on the trailer's gladhand seal with a tag indicating the trailer is not to be moved. The driver does not remove the wheel chocks or move the trailer in any way.



Simple preventative measures like lockouts and tagouts have the potential to save lives and are easy to implement in the workplace. If you're interested in learning more about how these measures work, please take a look at the links listed below.

Interested in further reading? Take a look at the following links:

[CCOHS fact sheet on lockout-tagout](#)

OHS: Occupational Health and Safety article "[Lockout/Tagout Procedures—Keep it Simple, Keep it Safe](#)"

[How to Write a LOTO \(lockout - tag out\) Policy, with template](#)

[Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulations, Part 16 Machines, Tools, and Robots \(Page 183\)](#)

Do you need more information? RPM can help!

We will be introducing a new course on lockout-tag out in the workplace in early 2022. Watch future RPM communications and our website for details.

Safety culture can be ingrained and accomplished by employers and management in leading by example. Some courses offered by RPM relating to leadership include Principles of Safety & Health Management, Safety and Health Leadership, Safety for Supervisors, and Train the Trainer - Theory.

Please note RPM courses are offered to RPM registered companies only. Your company must be registered with RPM and be in the process of working towards certification or must have achieved the SAFE Work Manitoba Trucking Certificate of Recognition. Not yet registered in the RPM program? Today is a great day to get started!

Please contact RPM by emailing info@rpmsafety.ca or calling 204-632-6600, or by visiting our website www.rpmsafety.ca.