



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



Langley Research Center Safety Alert

Date: July 9, 2003

SA-05-03

TO: All Langley Employees

FROM: 429/Head, Safety and Facility Assurance Office, OSMA

SUBJECT: Changes to LaRC's Lockout/Tagout System

The following exception to the use of lockout/tagout (LOTO) is rescinded, effective immediately (reference LaPG 1710.10, "Safety Clearance Procedures (Lockout/Tagout)," Chapter 3).

"EXCEPTION: The application of LOTO may be omitted if:

The worker, the worker's supervisor, the Facility Coordinator (FC) and the Facility Safety Head (FSH) agree that personnel and equipment safety can be maintained during the task without the performance of LOTO. However, THE WORKER, HIS/HER SUPERVISOR, THE FC, OR THE FSH MAY REQUIRE THE USE OF LOTO.

Maintenance personnel may omit LOTO when performing minor maintenance or repairs to equipment when energy isolation devices are within sight of and under the direct control of workers and the task can be performed in a short period of time. Once the maintenance personnel have begun the minor maintenance task, if at any time it becomes necessary for all workers involved to leave the site, then LOTO shall be performed. Examples of intended use of this exception are:

- The servicing of heating, ventilating, and air conditioning units where a National Electric Code required service disconnect is within site of the unit.
- The servicing of a pressure system, when the double block and bleed is within sight of and under direct control of the workers performing the task."

The use of this exception has been revoked because it is in direct violation of OSHA 29 CFR 1910.147, "The control of hazardous energy (lockout/tagout)." Personnel must now use LOTO in any situation outlined above, and employees cannot decide not to use LOTO if they deem it safe.

A Craft Specific Single Source Lockout (CSSSL) system is currently under development. Once implemented, CSSSL will allow qualified Safety Operators to use a Safety and Facility Assurance Office (SFAO) supplied lock, with a picture

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identification card attached, to lockout equipment with a single source during maintenance. Until implementation of these changes, personnel must use the LOTO system as outlined in LaPG 1710.10. Additional information about these changes to the LOTO system will be forthcoming.

The SFAO would also like to take this opportunity to inform employees who use shop machines to isolate the power source prior to servicing or maintaining a shop machine if the work:

- (1) Requires removal or bypassing a guard or other safety device or
- (2) Requires an employee to place any part of his or her body into an area on a machine where work is actually performed upon the material being processed (point of operation) or where an associated danger zone exists during machine operating cycle.

Examples of when power isolation is needed are changing a band saw blade or changing the wheel on a bench grinder. Exceptions to this requirement are minor tool changes, minor adjustments, or other minor servicing activities, which take place during normal production operations provided that the work is performed using alternative measures that provide effective protection. Personnel in the SFAO can assist in evaluating the effectiveness of alternative measures by calling 47233 (4SAFE) or 43069.

For shop machines with a plug, an acceptable power isolation method is unplugging the device from the energy source as long as the plug is under the exclusive control of the employee performing the servicing. However, if an employee walks away from an unplugged machine, the plug is no longer considered under exclusive control and LOTO is required. For shop machines with a disconnect, the disconnect must be secured by LOTO as outlined in LaPG 1710.10.

A Shop Machine Lockout (SML) system is currently under development. Once implemented, SML will allow shop machine operators to use a SFAO supplied lock, with a picture identification card attached, to lockout shop machines fed from a readily identifiable single source.

Any questions about LaRC's LOTO system should be addressed to Harold Beazley at 43368.

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43069

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