



## March 27 — Controlled Energy, Uncontrolled Ground

While performing a lock out for us, the client tripped over the corner of a pallet and slipped in the oil that was covering the floor. He caught himself before falling and no harm was done.

Removed the pallet and cleaned up the oil before starting our repair. I mentioned to the supervisor that he should slow down and not rush. The line was scheduled down for PM's so there was no need to be in a hurry, he agreed.

During a lockout process, a supervisor walking through the area caught the corner of a pallet and slipped in oil that had accumulated on the floor. He recovered his balance before falling.

Clean floors are safety controls.  
Housekeeping is hazard prevention.

Lockout work requires focus verifying isolation points, confirming energy control, checking procedures. But while attention is directed at controlling hazardous energy, the environment underfoot still matters.

Oil on walking surfaces reduces traction. Pallets left in travel paths create trip points. When those two combine, even a steady worker can lose balance quickly. A slip during lockout can result in head injury, contact with equipment, or secondary exposure to other hazards.

This wasn't a failure of procedure. It was a breakdown in housekeeping. And housekeeping is part of safety control not separate from it.

Energy may be locked out. Gravity never is.

### Hazards

- Slip and fall
- Head strike
- Sprains or fractures
- Secondary impact with equipment
- Contaminated walking surface exposure

### Stats

- Slips, trips, and falls remain among the most common workplace injuries.
- Poor housekeeping is a frequent contributing factor in fall incidents.
- Many fall injuries occur during routine tasks — not high-risk operations.
- Surface contamination significantly increases fall risk.

### Humans at Work

When we focus on controlling a major hazard, our attention narrows. During lockout, the mind locks onto energy points, procedures, and verification. That is task fixation. The problem is, the ground does not disappear just because our attention shifts. Add self imposed stress to that. Even when there is no real deadline, we create urgency in our own head. We move faster than we need to. We rush steps that do not need rushing. That is when small hazards get missed.

The lesson is simple. Controlling one risk does not remove the others. Slow down enough to see the whole environment, not just the task in front of you.

### Pause and Think

- Are you rushing even when you do not need to?
- What hazards are outside the task you are concentrating on?