



February 10 — De-Energized Doesn't Mean Danger-Free

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| <p>Employee did not have on hand protection while working inside a de-energized and locked out starter. This could have resulted in a pinch or cut inside the starter.</p> | <p>Stopped the employee and had them get their leather gloves on to protect their hands.</p> |
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An employee was working inside a de-energized and locked-out motor starter without hand protection, creating exposure to pinch points and sharp internal components.

**The power was off, the lock was tight,
But metal inside can still bite.
Gloves on hands before you start,
So steel and skin stay far apart.**

Lockout removed the electrical hazard, but it didn't remove the mechanical one. Inside starters are sharp edges, springs, contacts, and tight clearances that don't disappear when power is off. When the mind relaxes because energy is controlled, hands often move faster and with less caution. That's when cuts and pinch injuries happen.

Zero energy does not mean zero risk.

Hazards

- Cuts from sharp metal edges and burs
- Pinch injuries from moving components or springs
- Hand injuries in tight working spaces
- Infection risk from deep lacerations
- Secondary injuries from sudden hand withdrawal

Stats

- Hand injuries are among the most frequent injuries in electrical and maintenance work
- Many injuries occur during maintenance, not operation
- Sharp edges inside electrical equipment are a common cause of lacerations
- PPE omissions are a leading contributor to recordable hand injuries

Words of Wisdom

- Lockout stops electricity, not steel.
- If your hands are in it, protect them.

Pause and Think

Lockout creates a psychological shift. Once energy is controlled, people feel safe enough to move quickly. But equipment still has physical hazards that don't care about voltage. Gloves aren't just for live work they're for contact with the unknown inside machinery.

- What hazards remain after energy is controlled?
- When do we tend to relax our guard too early?
- How do we treat mechanical hazards with the same respect as electrical ones?