



## April 8 — Before You Touch It

<b>An customers maintenance trainee attempted to work on a pump without locking it out.</b>	<b>I stopped the trainee and explained the importance of customers' life critical standards then proceeded to make sure the employee locked out on the proper lockout.</b>
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An employee was preparing to work on a pump.

Tools were nearby. The task was about to begin. But one critical step hadn't happened yet. The equipment was not locked out.

Nothing had been touched. No work had started. And that's exactly what made this a good catch.

Lockout isn't something you do during the job. It's what makes the job safe to start.

Even when equipment looks off, sounds quiet, or hasn't moved in a while — energy can still be present. Pressure, stored energy, or unexpected movement can all happen without warning.

The job was paused. The system was locked out. Then the work continued.

This wasn't about correcting a mistake after the fact. It was about making sure the conditions were right before anything began.

### Hazards

- Unexpected equipment start-up
- Release of stored energy (pressure, mechanical)
- Pinch points and rotating components
- Line of fire exposure during maintenance
- Crushing or entanglement injuries

### Stats

- Failure to control hazardous energy is a leading cause of serious maintenance injuries
- OSHA estimates thousands of injuries occur each year related to improper lockout
- Many incidents happen during routine servicing tasks
- Proper lockout procedures prevent countless injuries when followed correctly

### Words of Wisdom

- If it's not locked out, it's not safe
- Quiet equipment can still hurt you
- The job doesn't start until energy is controlled

### Pause and Think

It's easy to step into a task before everything is fully set. You walk up, take a look, maybe start positioning yourself and before you realize it, you're already moving forward.

That's how steps get skipped. Not intentionally, but because the mind shifts into "doing" mode instead of "preparing" mode.

Lockout is different. It doesn't depend on what you see or hear. It depends on what you verify.

The best time to catch a missed step is before anything begins.

- Have I verified all energy sources are isolated before starting work?
- Am I treating lockout as the first step not a step along the way?
- Do I ever move into position before confirming it's safe?
- Would I stop someone else if they skipped this step?