



## June 29 — Trust, But Verify

<p><b>Multiple operators told me my lock out was apart of a mass dryer lockout however come to find out the water line had an independent lock out after realizing a stop work was done until I verified the new lockout and applied locks to it.</b></p>	<p><b>Removal of locks, walkthrough done on new box.</b></p>
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It's easy to accept information when it comes from several people. After all, if everyone is saying the same thing, it must be correct... right?

An employee was preparing to work under a mass dryer lockout when multiple operators explained that the water line was already included as part of the existing lockout. Before proceeding, the employee took time to verify the isolation and discovered that the water line actually had its own independent lockout point.

Recognizing the discrepancy, the employee stopped work until the lockout could be properly verified. The locks were removed, a walkthrough was conducted, and the correct lockout points were identified before work continued.

At first glance, this may seem like a simple misunderstanding. In reality, it highlights one of the most important principles of lockout: never rely solely on what you've been told when your safety depends on verification.

Most people involved in this situation believed they were providing accurate information. That's what makes observations like this so valuable. Mistakes don't always happen because someone is careless or intentionally ignores a procedure. Sometimes incorrect information is passed along, assumptions are made, or conditions change over time without everyone realizing it.

One of the challenges with complex systems is that employees often become familiar with how things have "always been done." Over time, that familiarity can create confidence that may not always match the actual condition of the equipment. That's why lockout procedures require employees to verify energy isolation for themselves rather than relying on memory, assumptions, or secondhand information.

In this case, the employee trusted the process, not the assumption. That decision prevented work from beginning until everyone was confident the equipment was properly isolated.

### Hazards

- Unexpected energy release
- Incomplete lockout
- Unexpected equipment startup
- Caught between hazards
- Struck by hazards
- Incorrect energy isolation

### Words of Wisdom

Good information is valuable, but verification is essential. When hazardous energy is involved, always confirm that the equipment is isolated and controlled before beginning work.

### Pause and Think

- Have you ever discovered a condition that was different from what you were told?
- Why is verification such an important part of the lockout process?
- How can assumptions develop over time in complex systems?
- What should you do if something doesn't match the procedure or information you've been given?
- Why is stopping work sometimes the safest decision you can make?

### Closing Thought

Being close to the work doesn't mean you need to be close to the hazard.