

SAFE WORKING – LOCKING OFF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Before attempting any maintenance or other work (such as removing guards on conveyors, for example) on any electrically operated equipment it is essential that measures be taken to prevent the equipment operating.

This can only be done by isolating the equipment at its power source.

Electrical isolation can only be achieved by breaking the electrical contacts feeding the equipment – these may be housed in an electrical panel feeding only that piece of equipment, or the panel may feed more than one piece of plant.



All isolation handles are fitted with a device that allows the handle to be locked in the contactor open (equipment isolated) position.

To prevent removal of isolation while you work on the equipment, you must ensure that you have locked off the equipment controlled by the panel.

- Lock out procedure incorporates locks and personal tags at isolation point(s).
- A test is conducted by a competent person(s) to ensure the isolation is effective.

Golden Rule 4 states

“Do not work on equipment unless:

- you have securely isolated the equipment using a personal lock
- you have checked that the right piece of equipment has been isolated
- any stored energy has been safely released
- equipment that could move has been secured.”

Everybody working on the job must put their own padlock on the isolation point.

To ensure that you can work safely, you must have in your possession a personal lock (with a single key) which can be clearly identified as your lock for the purpose of isolation, and depending on circumstances a “multihasp” to allow more than one lock to be applied to the isolation point.

Never allow anyone else to remove your lock – under any circumstances.

Never rely on someone else’s lock applied to an isolation point to make the equipment safe while you work on it – it could be removed at any time and the equipment started while you are still working.

Never rely on emergency stops or pull wires to make equipment safe for working – they can be reset without your knowledge.

Never defeat or sprag start buttons – it is a highly dangerous practice and may result in failure of protective devices and inadvertent start up of equipment.

Always ‘ensure that all guards and safety systems are put back when the work is complete’ – Golden Rule 4

You may also require a Permit To Work when isolating some items of machinery or plant.

Remember – you may not get a second chance – make yourself safe **ALWAYS**



QUESTIONS – (there may be more than one correct answer)

		A	B	C
1	Can anybody work on electrical equipment or supplies?	No – only supervisors	Only trained / authorised persons	Only production operatives familiar with equipment
2	If an electrical cable is damaged, what should you do?	Try to repair it to avoid delays	Switch off, and remove from use	Put it down and use another cable
3	If any electrical equipment is damaged, should you?	Tell a mate	Report it to your supervisor immediately	Report it later, because you're in the middle of a job
4	If someone else has fitted a lock to an isolator, do you need to fit yours?	No – just make sure you finish before him	No - tell the plant operator that you're working in the area	Yes – always fit your personal lock
5	Do you need to check that the right piece of equipment is isolated?	No – it's obvious	Sometimes – depends on the task	Yes - always

