

# Lockout Tagout Training Briefing For Workers



Dozens of Canadian workers lose their limbs or lives in machine accidents each year. In many of these cases, the accident occurred because the machine unexpectedly started up while workers were servicing it. That's why OHS laws require employers to implement lockout and tagout [\(LOTO\) measures](#) to isolate and de-energize machinery before performing work on it. It's also crucial to train your workers on the LOTO procedures you use to control hazardous energy at your workplace. Of course, the first challenge is getting workers to pay attention. While machine injury statistics are all well and good, nothing grabs attention like the story of a real-life tragedy to a real-life victim. Here's a powerful account of one such story that you might want to incorporate into your LOTO Safety Talks or training lessons.

## Why LOTO Matters: The Tragic Death of Day Davis

Every year, dozens of Canadian workers lose their limbs and lives as a result of machine accidents. The important thing isn't the number but the fact that each and every one of these "dozens of workers" was a flesh-and-blood person like you. Here's the sad story of one of those victims.

**August 16, 2012.** It's day one on the job for 21-year-old Lawrence Daquan "Day" Davis. It's a low-paying, temporary job.

But times are tough and jobs are scarce. Besides, the assignment is a plumb: the Jacksonville, FL Bacardi bottling plant, the North American HQ of the world's most famous rum maker.

Day is excited for the opportunity. He tells his mom that he'll make enough money to pay off her car repair bills. "Do good and don't mess up," chides Day's younger sister.

It's a hot, humid day. Day reports to Warehouse No. 7 early for his 3:00 PM shift. After a 15-minute safety orientation, he goes to the restroom and takes a photo of himself in the mirror, proudly showing off his new work clothes and orange safety vest. He texts the picture to his fiancé, Alicia, and promises to call her during his break.

Meanwhile, down on the warehouse floor, things are going wrong with one of the gigantic palletizer machines used to push the rum bottles down a conveyor to a platform where they're gathered into a square. Then, when the platform is full, the machine lowers the cases onto a pallet 10 feet (3.048 meters) below for shrink-wrapping and goes back up to retrieve another set of cases.

At least that's how it's supposed to work. But on this afternoon, there are problems with Palletizer #4. Cases are getting stuck on the conveyor and slamming into each other. Bottles are breaking on the line. Reluctant to stop the machine, the operator wipes the conveyor with rags and tries to keep the cases in line and clear the jams. But it doesn't work. So, he finally hits the emergency STOP button and goes inside the machine to sweep up the glass and toss out the mangled boxes.

Finding the job too big for one person, the operator radios for help. The manager sends the new "gung ho" temp who just started 90 minutes earlier. Day Davis, eager to get the job done, grabs a broom, climbs under the machine and, lying on

his back, starts sweeping the broken glass into a dustpan.

A few minutes later, the operator finishes his own cleaning and turns the machine back on, not realizing that Day is still underneath. Day hears the cases start to roll and tries to stand up. But as he gets halfway to his feet, a platform carrying 60 cases of rum weighing 1 ton (907 kg) comes crashing down on top of him.

Workers hear Day's cries and rush to his side. But it's too late. Day dies on the floor without ever making that first break.

## **What Lockout Tagout Is**

With rare exceptions, it's too dangerous to service, repair, or perform other work on a machine while it's still running. You have to shut the machine down first. But just hitting the OFF switch isn't enough. You also need to lock the machine and disconnect it from its power source so it doesn't unexpectedly start up while a worker is servicing it. This process of controlling hazardous energy while servicing machines is called lockout tagout (LOTO) and it's required not just by Company safety policy but OHS law.

## **How LOTO Would Have Saved Day Davis' Life**

What happened to Day Davis is precisely what LOTO is designed to prevent. Had the Bacardi plant followed OHS LOTO rules, after stopping the palletizer, the operator would have attached a lock to ensure that nobody came by and turned it on while somebody was inside or underneath it. Then, after the lock was attached, the operator would have gone downstairs to hit another emergency STOP button and insert 2 bars to completely prevent the platform from moving. The palletizer wouldn't have been restarted unless and until steps were taken

to verify that it was safe to do so.

Had the Bacardi implemented these LOTO measures, the accident that cost Day Davis his life wouldn't have happened.

## **Don't Let It Happen Here!!!**

So, who will be the next one of those "dozens of workers" who suffer machine injuries each year? Completing this LOTO training is the best way to ensure that what happened to Day Davis doesn't happen to you or one of your coworkers.