

Meatballs

“You get no bread with one meatball.”
Depression era folk song

2

Dec 14, 2001

PLEASE PASS THIS ON

Meatballs is put out in the belief that a strong union at SHAP depends on an informed and involved membership. Meatballs welcomes different points of view. Contact Mike Parker, electrician second shift, body shop, or you can email meatballs@rts-tech.com. Publication labor is voluntary and views are those of the writers.

Lock-out

Safety procedure is again a big issue here at SHAP. Management does not want us following the rules they have endorsed while issuing discipline for arbitrary verbal orders. What we need to be clear on:

1. There is **only one kind** of OSHA lock-out. That is a full safety lock-out where all sources of electrical air and pneumatic power are locked out and where all stored energy such as air pressure, or the mechanical energy from gravitational force are effectively reduced to zero or blocked. In this plant it generally means a lock on one or more main electrical disconnects, a lock on the air supply valve, bleeding air pressure, and inserting pins as specified to protect against mechanical motion.
2. A Cycle-Stop button or an E-Stop button, with or without a lock, *in no way fulfill the OSHA requirements for full lock-out.*
3. There is no posted safety procedure on most machines we have here. Instead there is a chart detailing where lock-out devices are located.

In my opinion, here is what we must have:

1. Management must take responsibility and post what it believes are "routine tasks" and the **minimum procedures** to provide that these tasks can be done with safety. Management will have to accept liability for these policies and the union should be able to grieve them.
2. We have to insist on our **individual** rights to make the **judgment** about what is "routine" and when further safety precautions are required, including full lock-out.
3. We need the **right to refuse** any work or action we deem unsafe to another person or ourselves. If there is a dispute with management on this, no order to do the work will be made without authorization from both the appropriate union and company safety officers.
4. We have to insist on our **right to have a "buddy"** when we work with the power on or in any other circumstance which involves climbing on a machine, in a machine or putting ourselves in the path of a machine or in isolation.. A management person whose main job is to get production rolling has a conflict of interest and should not be counted as a "buddy." We have to admit that we can not get rid of all the dangers of skilled trades work because we work on machines not operating normally. That is why we need extra skilled eyes and ears on most jobs.

continued over

What OSHA says

29 CFR 1910.147

The control of hazardous energy (lock-out/tagout)

(a)(1)(i) This standard covers the servicing and maintenance of machines and equipment in which the unexpected energization or start up of the machines or equipment, or release of stored energy could cause injury to employees.

The requirements for full lock-out as required under this act are quite strict and require locking out **all** energy sources and/or pinning machines to block stored energy sources.

If we were to follow this required procedure every time we entered a cell to un-jam a part, change a blown tip etc, it would take 15 minutes to an hour to get the machine back in automatic.

Chrysler presumably wishes to operate under the section of OSHA which allows an exception to lock-out requirements..

(a)(2)(ii) ... Servicing and/or maintenance which takes place during normal production operations is covered by this standard only if;

(a)(2)(ii)(A) An employee is required to remove or bypass a guard or other safety device; or

(a)(2)(ii)(B) An employee is required to place any part of his or her body into an area on a machine or piece of equipment where work is actually performed upon the material being processed (point of operation) or where an associated danger zone exists during a machine operating cycle.

NOTE: Exception to paragraph (a)(2)(ii): Minor tool changes and adjustments, and other minor servicing activities, which take place during normal production operations, are not covered by this standard if they are routine, repetitive, and integral to the use of the equipment for production, provided that the work is performed using alternative measures which provide effective protection.

Clearly our work requires us to bypass a safety device and enter "danger zones." So for anything less than a full lock-out management would have to argue that our work falls under the exception rather than the rule.

Bu this exception requires proving two things:

1. **The operation is routine and repetitive .**
2. **The alternative measures provide effective protection.**

This requires discussion, judgment, and negotiation usually on a case by case basis. There can be no rigid maximum here except for full lock-out.

The full OSHA regulations on lock-out can be found at http://www.osha-slc.gov/OshStd_data/1910_0147.html

5. We have to insist on safety training before we work on machines/cells. The training has to be by another tradesperson who knows the specific equipment/cell and who has him/herself had more intensive safety training. Again supervisors have a conflict of interest here too.
6. Trades should develop safety practices for group work like checking for all people present and calling for "clear."

What the controls do

It is particularly important that non-electricians and those electricians not familiar with an area know exactly what various controls do (and do not do) so they can protect themselves while they are focusing on their own work tasks.

Safety-Gate interlock

- ? Does not remove power. Signals the controller to stop automatic operation for the cell.
- ? May or may not be interlocked with conveyors in the cell or with other cells.
- ? Usually allows manual operation of components from the PanelView, control panel, or robot pendant.

Cycle-Stop

- ? Does the same thing as safety-gate interlock.

E-Stop.

- ? Much safer than Cycle-Stop since the controls open all electrical power to the equipment.
- ? But it does not remove stored energy (e.g. valving is still possible) and may not remove all sources of electrical power in a complicated cell.
- ? Because E-Stop usually requires a more complicated restarting procedure, its use is often discouraged.

All of these depend on proper wiring, proper PLC logic, and proper system architecture. They assume that nothing has been jumped out, that there are no grounds in the control circuitry, and no malfunctioning parts. In fact there are numerous systems in the plant that have control grounds (note the ground lights on the cabinet). There are cells at SHAP where the E-Stop does not stop the conveyor. And there are cases of unexpected motion of weld guns even while the cell is in Cycle-Stop.

Election Results

I congratulate Mike Yanoulakis and Bob Travelbee on their election as delegates to the skilled trades conference. We can be proud of the large election turnout and that the election minimized personal attacks and focused more on the future of our union and issues of bargaining.

I believe that we must continue to build our unity to face a clear corporate attack on the union which includes deskilling of the trades. I look forward to working with Mike, Bob, and our elected leaders as well as other members on issues that affect all of us.

Mike Parker

Some history

The current corporate interest in safety stems from the death in May, 2000 of Larry Fuentes, a machine repairman at the Toledo Jeep plant who was drawn into a machine despite the fact that he had opened a safety gate to enter the cell. I circulated a letter at SHAP detailing the Toledo events and pointing out that their so-called safety procedures were identical to ours. I also argued that SHAP's safety policies were designed to protect them against liability by setting us up for blame if any accident happens. According to the previous SHAP management Safety Supervisor this letter caused some buzz in upper corporate and they began scrambling to implement new safety procedures. Corporate still does not have it right. The main reason is that the corporate mentality wants a rigid rule instead of allowing us to use our judgment and giving us proper training.

Typically, what happens with rigid and unreasonable rules is that we tend to ignore them in order to get the job done. This doubly pleases the company since they can blame the victim if anything bad happens and they have a rule on the books they can use to take hostages.

Management's Policy?

SHAP management's official safety policy requiring locks on **E-Stop** buttons for **routine** maintenance is almost a year old. The policy makes clear that this is a minimum procedure and calls for doing a full power lock-out for all other work except trouble shooting. Eleven months ago, the SHAP Safety Team adopted the following letter. Note that this is almost identical to the one recently circulated by SHAP management Safety Supervisor John Lauhoff .

For your Safety Make Sure This Equipment is Safe

There are two times you are permitted to enter an interlocked area without locking out the equipment:

- 1) when trouble shooting and
- 2) when making adjustments that require power. For all other tasks, you must lock-out the machine.

If you are trouble-shooting or making adjustments that require power on, you must work with a "buddy." Your buddy must be in a position to see you and have the ability to shut down the machine immediately if unexpected motion is initiated.

Trouble shooting stops when the problem is discovered. The equipment must be locked out before corrective action is started! To do this, follow the posted lock-out procedure.

If you are performing routine or frequent tasks you may lock-out the station you are working on using the lockable "E-Stop" button. This button is located on the pushbutton panel for the station you are working on. A routine or frequent task is one that occurs on a regular basis. Examples of this include changing: welding tips, sockets on multihead nut runners, etc.

If you are doing any other type of work you must lock-out the machine using the posted lock-out procedure.

If you are not sure, it is best to lock-out the equipment. If you want additional lock-out information, contact your safety office or skilled trades trainer.