

Part 4: Lockout for Safety – HOT TOPIC!

One of the fundamental safe systems of work that every park and attraction owner should have as part of a safety management system is a lockout, i.e., a tag-out isolation procedure.



The principal purpose of a good lockout procedure is to ensure the safety of staff, contractors and guests. Lockouts save lives!

So, what is a lockout procedure?

A lockout procedure is a procedure that will protect employees, contractors and guests in the park from inadvertent operation of mechanical equipment, and energising of electrical circuits, while performing work on, or in the immediate vicinity of, motor-driven, electrical or pressurised equipment.

Lockouts should primarily be used on or around rides and attractions in a park or attraction.

- Lockout provides a safe system of work.
- Lockout is a planned safety procedure.

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In general terms

- All park employees and contractors shall not work on or in ride-enclosure areas, equipment, vessels, etc., which are not in a 'zero' energy state.
- Isolate energy sources that can be hazardous.
- These sources include, but are not limited to, electrical circuits, hydraulics, pneumatics and gravitational forces.



When should a lockout be applied?

Examples:

- During maintenance periods, e.g., morning Inspections
- During cleaning by both operations and maintenance teams
- During evacuations to prevent unexpected start-ups

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- When entering restricted areas, e.g., during retrieval of lost property, inspections
- When isolating individual elements, e.g., when a train/gondola is out of service
- During annual inspections to prevent unexpected start-ups
- During facility-work activities to keep gardeners/carpenters/plumbers safe

Creation and culture

- Engage those working on attractions throughout the creation of your **lockout policy**
- Make it practical and easy to follow
- Take a risk assessment approach
- Ensure personnel involved in isolation are trained and competent
- Audit and monitor your systems to find deficiencies
- Consider permit-to-work systems
- Embed lockout into your **Safe Systems of Work**
- Review the policy whenever modifications are made to an attraction

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Always consider

- Lost property – Reduce the number of items guests take with them onto an attraction and ensure that you have a robust safe item-retrieval policy in place
- Ride-perimeter fencing – Ensure that fencing is suitable, up to standard and that guests cannot easily breach it
- Post safety and instructional signs at all access points into a secure ride-enclosure area
- Use safety interlocks on access gates into secure ride-enclosure areas wherever possible
- Single seats: Ensure that individual seats can be isolated when not in service
- Clearly identify what system or part of a system each lockout isolates – remember that there could be several on one ride that enable some systems to remain operational
- Clearly identify all ride and attraction lockout points
- Remember that not all energy is (live) mechanical or electrical. It could be stored energy, such as compressed air, gravity or hydraulics. Remember that your isolation goal is 'ZERO' energy state.
- Ensure that lockout protocols are embedded within your contractors' safety plan – remember that contractors may not normally work on or around rides and attractions and may not be aware of associated risks
- Ensure that you have a robust procedure in place to manage the all-important ride-handover process from maintenance to operations.