

ISOLATION - SAFETY PRACTICE

OVERVIEW

This Safety Practice describes the control of the hazards posed by Isolations and to ensure employees and subcontractors are fully protected from sources of energy when working on or servicing plant, equipment and services and that any faulty or otherwise damaged plant, equipment or services are identified and removed from service.

Every year people at work are injured, sometimes fatally, when plant is inadvertently activated. These injuries can be prevented by introducing and following correct isolation procedures. Before any plant, equipment or services are inspected, repaired, maintained or cleaned, they must, where practicable, be shut down and the energy sources locked out and tagged as part of an isolation procedure to ensure the safety of those doing the work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Management	Provide resources, equipment and systems to ensure isolation activities are managed safely and in accordance with this procedure and legislative requirements.
HSEQ Team	Provide guidance on isolation requirements, support implementation of safe isolation practices, monitor compliance, and maintain associated systems and documentation.
Site Manager / Supervisor	Ensure isolation requirements are identified, appropriate permits and controls are implemented, verify isolation activities are undertaken by competent persons, and monitor compliance before plant, equipment or services are returned to operation.
Workers	Follow approved isolation procedures, use lock-out/tag-out devices correctly, do not remove another person's isolation device or tag, report faulty plant, equipment or services, and immediately report any unsafe conditions.
Competent Persons	Plan and carry out isolation activities in accordance with approved permits, verify all energy sources have been isolated before commencing work, and ensure plant, equipment or services are safe before returning them to service.
Subcontractors	Ensure their workers are competent to perform isolation activities, comply with Perkins Builders' isolation requirements, and use approved permits, lock-out/tag-out devices and safe work practices.

1. DEFINITIONS

Guidance:

Isolations pertain to plant, equipment and services.

Types of energy that require Isolation: Electrical, Hydraulic, Pneumatic, Thermal, Kinetic, Chemical.

2. OUT OF SERVICE TAGS

Guidance:

An 'Out of Service' tag is used to be used to ensure that unsafe, defective or faulty plant, equipment or services are not operated (except in order to make safe or to test it after repairs).

Any person regardless of qualification can place an 'Out of Service' tag. Before placing an 'Out of Service' tag ensure all details are filled out in pen on the back of the tag.

The person placing the 'Out of Service' Tag is responsible for notifying the Site Manager that a tag has been placed and the reasons why.

The Site Manager is responsible for ensuring a competent person is selected to do the repair work.

An 'Out of Service' tag can only be removed by the person effecting repairs, or by the Site Manager when the Site Manager is satisfied that the plant, equipment or service is in a usable or safe condition.

3. ISOLATION – LOCK-OUT AND TAG-OUT

Guidance:

Isolations involve the removal of an energy source from an item of plant, equipment or service in such a way as to prevent the possibility of inadvertent energisation of the whole or a specified section of that plant, equipment or service being worked upon.

Projects with adjoining operating premises/facilities (i.e. extensions to existing facilities) require a [Project Shutdown Form \(Form 245\)](#) to be completed by the Site Manager. The Project Shutdown Form must be completed prior to the issuing of any Isolation Permit and subsequent Isolations.

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Any isolations require an Isolation Permit (Form 985 / Hammertech) to be completed and submitted to the Site Manager for review and approval. No isolations shall commence without an approved Isolation Permit. All isolations shall be logged on Hammertech and shall be monitored by the Site Manager.

When completing isolation works on older buildings where switchboards are not sufficiently earth leakage protected, there is a possibility neutrals will remain live. This needs to be taken into consideration and necessary controls implemented. Correct PPE should be worn (insulated gloves), and when moving cables the neutral cable should be disconnected.

All plant, equipment and services must be locked-out and tagged-out when being inspected, repaired, maintained or cleaned to protect against accidental or inadvertent operation, when such operation could cause injury.

The competent person performing the work will inform the persons whose plant, equipment or service required to be locked-out and tagged-out, that the lock-out and tag-out safety practice is to be implemented.

The competent person will then:

- Shut down the plant, equipment or service using the normal shutdown procedures.
- Determine the Isolation/Lock-Out position on the plant, equipment or service.
- Disconnect all sources of energy (e.g. electrical, pneumatic, mechanical or hydraulic energy) coming to the machine.
- Test that all sources of energy have been isolated
- All workers must be physically shown all relevant isolation points by a competent person.
- Attach a Danger Tag at the isolation point to indicate that the plant or equipment is being worked on (note: an individual Danger Tag and Lock-Out device shall be placed by all persons working on the plant, equipment or service).
- Test before you Touch. Before commencement of any work on the plant or equipment the service controls must be operated to confirm that the plant, equipment or service has been isolated and cannot be re-energized. Return the controls to the neutral position.
- Commence work.
- Upon completing work, all workers shall remove their Personnel Danger Tag and lock and inform the Site Manager. Site Manager shall inspect area and cancel Isolation Permit.
- Upon cancellation of the Isolation Permit by the Site Manager the competent person conducting isolation works shall remove their tags and lock and re-energise.

Danger tags must be fastened securely so they will not become detached.

The only person permitted to remove a Danger Tag or Lock-out device is the person who placed them, however in exceptional circumstances a Danger Tag or Lock-out device may be removed by the Site Manager, provided that the Site Manager is able to verify where the person who placed them is and the reason for placement is clear or fixed before removal.

On completion of work, check to ensure that all tools have been removed and safety guards, if previously removed, have been replaced.

Verify that all personnel are safely clear of the machine.

Test plant, equipment or service for correct operation.

Inform personnel that the plant, equipment or service is now ready for use.

4. TRAINING

Guidance:

Competent persons who will be involved in the placement of Danger Tags and Lock-Out devices shall receive specific training in this procedure and hold relevant task specific training.

5. INSPECTIONS

Guidance:

The Site Manager, during daily inspections of the site, will monitor subcontractor compliance to this Isolation Safety Practice.

LINK TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- [Project Shutdown Form \(Form 245\)](#)

REFERENCES

- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022
- Code of Practice: Managing risks of plant in the workplace

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