

Circuits Off, Disabled, and Tagged

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

Before anyone works on electrical equipment, the crew needs more than a switch in the off position. On construction sites, different workers may use the same controls, and someone may try to restart equipment without knowing work is underway. Making circuits inoperative and clearly tagging them helps prevent that dangerous mistake.

Know What Must Be Shut Down

- Before starting, identify the equipment or circuit being worked on. Make sure the crew understands which controls belong to it; nearby switches or similar equipment can cause confusion.
- Identify every point where that equipment or circuit can be energized. Do not assume the most visible switch is the only place where power can be turned on.
- OSHA requires employers to instruct each worker in recognizing and avoiding unsafe conditions, and in the rules that apply to their work. If you do not understand the shutdown arrangements or your role, stop and ask your supervisor before proceeding.

Disable the Circuit and Place Tags

- OSHA requires deenergized equipment and circuits to be made inoperative, so they cannot run. Turning something off is not the same as making it unable to operate; follow the established shutdown method rather than guessing.
- Attach tags at every point where the equipment or circuit can be energized. A tag at the work area alone does not cover a separate location where someone can restore power.
- Tag any control that is to be switched off during the work, whether the equipment or circuit is energized or deenergized. Each tag must plainly identify the equipment or circuit being worked on, so nobody has to guess what it covers.

Respect the Tags

- Before work begins, check that tags match the equipment and are readable. Report a missing, damaged, or confusing tag instead of assuming another worker knows what it means.
- Do not operate tagged controls or bypass the shutdown arrangements to get another task moving. Tell other affected trades which equipment is out of service and where work is taking place.
- If equipment starts unexpectedly, or you discover an overlooked energizing point, stop work and alert the supervisor. Keep others away from the affected equipment until the unsafe condition has been addressed.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You are preparing to work on equipment. Its local control is off and tagged, but another worker points out a separate control that can energize it. That control has no tag. What would you do before letting the work begin?

Questions for the crew

1. Why is switching equipment off not enough?
2. Where must tags be attached?

3. What must each tag clearly identify?
4. What should you do if the shutdown arrangements are unclear?

Before work starts, make deenergized equipment inoperative and clearly tag every point where it can be energized.

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.417, Lockout and tagging of circuits; 29 CFR 1926.21, Safety training and education

Drafted with AI for review by a competent person. Clever Rook writes from the official regulation text it cites, but it doesn't know your site. Check it against your conditions and your company's safety program before use. Not legal advice.

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REVIEWED BY (COMPETENT PERSON)

REVIEW DATE

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