



**August 19, 2019**

The Honorable Loren Sweatt  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210

**Re: The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout), Docket Number: OSHA 2016-0013**

Dear Ms. Sweatt:

On the behalf of the National Demolition Association (NDA), I am writing to submit the following comments regarding The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout), Docket Number: OSHA 2016-0013. The National Demolition Association represents over 500 U.S. and Canadian companies that offer standard demolition services as well as a full range of demolition-related services and products. NDA educates members on the latest advances in equipment and services, provides educational programs and tools to stay abreast of regulatory and safety matters and keeps regulators informed about issues in our industry. NDA also increases public awareness of the economic and societal benefits of demolition.

First, NDA believes that the current LOTO standard is outdated. Since LOTO's promulgation in 1989, technology has significantly advanced and OSHA did not consider the current technology during the original rulemaking. OSHA should consider the current technology available in updates to the standard, but also allow for continued advancements as time goes on.

NDA is particularly interested in OSHA's focus on robotics and how they factor into these rules. As noted in the proposed rule, OSHA has previously focused on industrial robots, defined as "programmable multifunctional mechanical devices designed to move material, parts, tools, or specialized devices through variable programmed motions to perform a variety of tasks."<sup>1</sup>

NDA believes that anyone who operates, cleans, services, adjusts, and repairs machinery or equipment should be aware of the hazards associated with that machinery. Any powered machinery or electrical equipment that can move in a way that would put people in danger is a hazard that can be prevented by following locking or tagging procedures. Our members recognize that failure to lock out and tag power sources on equipment can result in electrocutions, amputations, and other serious-sometimes fatal-accidents. NDA supports LOTO standards as outlined in procedures we make available for our members.

In the demolition industry, advances in robotics are assisting with this technical kind of work and will continue to do so. In many cases, robotic systems provide a net benefit for workplace safety and decrease the risks of injury. As OSHA works to further develop robotics into the LOTO standard, OSHA should consider the unique complexity that comes with advanced technology, including safety, and include language that doesn't inadvertently subject safe and cost-effective technology to unnecessary regulation.

As part of NDA's commitment to safety, we advise our members to take the following steps to ensure robotics are utilized safely and effectively to prevent injury:

- Identify all tasks and machinery/equipment that require lockout of power sources;
- Ensure the machine is turned off AND the power source(s) that supply energy to it are locked out and tagged out;

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<sup>1</sup> OSHA, *Robotics: Overview*, available at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/robotics/index.html>.

- Post warning signs where needed to indicate that LOTO procedures are required;
- Develop written procedures explaining, in detail, how LOTO is to be accomplished;
- Train all personnel in the lockout procedures for their task and/or machinery and offer periodic refresher training;
- Allow no deviation from the written policies and procedures;
- Perform regular maintenance to prevent malfunctioning equipment.

NDA is ready to work with OSHA and represent the demolition industry as the Agency considers updates to the LOTO standard. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this issue. Please contact Kevin McKenney at [kmckenney@demolitionassociation.com](mailto:kmckenney@demolitionassociation.com) or 202-367-2480 with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Lambert". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "L".

Jeff Lambert  
Chief Executive Officer