

Change highlights: Managing the control of hazardous energy – Part 15 in the OHS Code

OHS information for work site parties

This bulletin introduces changes in Managing the Control of Hazardous Energy – Part 15 of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Code.

IMPORTANT

This is an overview of updates effective March 31, 2023. Consult the law directly to make sure you comply with all applicable requirements.

KEY INFORMATION

- Part 15 describes the requirements for isolating and securing sources of hazardous energy, and for verifying that sources are isolated or secured.
 - Hazardous energy is defined as “electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, chemical, nuclear, thermal, gravitational, or any other form of energy that could cause injury due to the unintended motion, energizing, start up, or release of such stored or residual energy in machinery, equipment, powered mobile equipment, piping, or pipelines.”
- Key changes include:
 - Clarified work site party responsibilities to align with the OHS Act.
 - Streamlined wording to improve clarity.
 - Removal of duplication in requirements.

Machinery, Equipment or Powered Mobile Equipment

The worker performing work on machinery, equipment, or powered mobile equipment is still responsible for verifying the machinery or equipment is safe in relation to hazardous energy. However, the new addition of “or otherwise made safe” to the “made inoperative” requirement provides flexibility in cases where the equipment may need to remain in operation, but can be made safe without turning it off.

Securing Isolation

Personal locks

Wording has been adjusted to make it clear it is the employer who is responsible for providing locks to their workers. Revised wording also clarifies that it is the

employer’s responsibility to record who they have assigned a personal lock to and how the lock is identified.

An employer may still transfer a personal lock to another worker if the worker who originally secured the personal lock has been reassigned before the work has been completed or the work is extended from one shift to another. In this case, the employer must ensure the control of the reassigned or departing worker’s personal lock is transferred to a supervisor or a worker designated by the employer. Wording has been adjusted to make the employer responsibility for transferring locks clearer.

Securing by individual workers

Once all energy-isolating devices have been activated to control hazardous energy, the employer must ensure a worker secures each energy-isolating device with a personal lock. Revised wording clarifies that it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure workers secure their personal locks.

Securing by group control procedures

Revised wording clarifies the employer’s requirement to develop and implement group control procedures when adequate protection would not be provided through securing by individual workers. Although this employer requirement is unchanged, previous wording did not make it clear that is a requirement.

As in the previous OHS Code, once all required energy-isolating devices have been activated, the employer must ensure a supervisor or a worker designated by the employer:

- Secures all energy-isolating devices and keys used to lock the devices.
- Completes and posts a report identifying the machinery and equipment covered by the group procedures.
- Verifies that all hazardous energy is effectively isolated.

Previous wording only indicated these tasks had to be done by “a designated worker,” and did not specify that it is the employer who is responsible for designating a worker or a supervisor to complete these tasks.

Securing by complex group control procedures

Employers must now develop and implement complex group control procedures when securing by individual workers or groups of workers would not provide adequate protection from hazardous energy because of any of the following:

- The physical size and extent of the machinery, equipment or powered mobile equipment.
- The relative inaccessibility of the energy isolating devices.
- The number of workers involved in the work requiring hazardous energy control.
- The number of energy isolating devices involved.
- The extended length of time of the required isolation.
- The interdependence and interrelationship of the components being isolated.
- Any other reason that would render compliance with the requirements of securing by individual workers or by group control procedures inadequate to protect the workers.

These procedures must be certified by a professional engineer as being safe and appropriate for workers.

Revised wording clarifies it is the employer’s responsibility to develop and implement procedures for a control system for isolating devices.

Piping or Pipelines

Pigging and testing of piping or pipelines

Requirements for pigging have not changed. However, new wording clarifies that employers must ensure workers involved in a pigging operation are not positioned in a location where they might be injured by the operation.

Definitions

The following definitions have been added to Part 15 to improve clarity, as they are technical terms for which a definition is required:

- “Pig” means a device inserted into piping or a pipeline to perform maintenance, cleaning, testing or other functions within the piping or pipeline without stopping the flow of substance within the piping or pipeline.
- “Pigging” means the process of inserting a pig into piping or a pipeline under pressure to perform maintenance, cleaning, testing or other functions.
- “Pigcatcher” means a device designed to safely receive a pig from piping or a pipeline.

In addition, the definition of hazardous energy has been updated by removing the reference to “process systems,” as well as the reference to “Part 15” (since the term is used in other areas of the OHS Code). “Powered mobile equipment” has also been added to the definition to align the changes to this part.

For more information

CSA Standards (free account required)
community.csagroup.org/login.jspa

OHS Code review
alberta.ca/ohs-code-review.aspx

Contact us

OHS Contact Centre

Anywhere in Alberta

- 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton and surrounding area

- 780-415-8690

Deaf or hard of hearing (TTY)

- 1-800-232-7215 (Alberta)
- 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)

Notify OHS of health and safety concerns

alberta.ca/file-complaint-online.aspx

Call the OHS Contact Centre if you have concerns that involve immediate danger to a person on a work site.

Report a workplace incident to OHS

alberta.ca/ohs-complaints-incidents.aspx

Website

alberta.ca/ohs

Get copies of the OHS Act, Regulation and Code

Alberta King’s Printer

alberta.ca/alberta-kings-printer.aspx

OHS

alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx

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