

# Rushing Causes Errors

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Employees are nine times more likely to make a lockout/tagout error when they are rushing.



## Lockout/Tagout

Lockout/tagout is a safety procedure where locks and tags are applied to a machine's power source. Employees turn off the power and lock the switch before working on a piece of equipment, preventing it from being started and injuring them.

### Not Rushing

Average number of incorrect lockout/tagouts:

**9**

out of 1,000 performed

### Rushing

Average number of incorrect lockout/tagouts when employee is rushing:

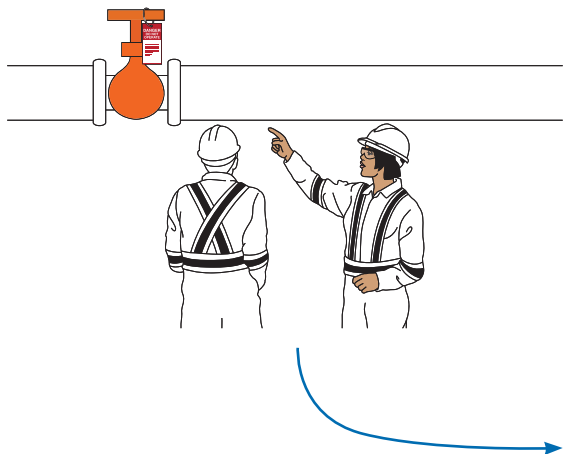
**81**

out of 1,000 performed

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## Background and References

When rushing can't be avoided, have someone else double check the work.



### Not Rushing

Average number of incorrect lockout/tagouts:  
9 out of 1,000 performed

### Rushing

Average number of incorrect lockout/tagouts:  
81 out of 1,000 performed

### Two People Checking

Average number of incorrect lockout/tagouts  
when someone double checks the work:  
3 out of 1,000 performed

## Putting an End to Lockout/Tagout Errors

A study was conducted on the BP Miller offshore platform, about 270 km northeast of Aberdeen, U.K. Platform audits revealed an increasing trend of serious lockout/tagout errors.

BP used human factor research conducted across process industries to estimate lockout/tagout error rates when the worker was rushing vs. not rushing, as well as with two people checking.

Platform management started a program that emphasized:

- fewer distractions for the employee doing the lockout/tagout
- removing time pressures to complete the lockout/tagout
- more emphasis on accurately labeling the equipment
- increased lockout/tagout training
- assigning a second person to double check the work.

Implementing this program reduced lockout/tagout error rates on the BP Miller platform by 66%.

Lardner, R. and J. Maitland, "To Err is Human — A Case Study of Error Prevention in Process Isolations," *Hazards XXI*, Symposium Series No. 155, pp. 536–541, <https://www.icheme.org/media/9574/xxi-paper-077.pdf> (2009).

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