



# Irish Concrete Federation

# Safety Bulletin

**SAFETY BULLETIN: ISOLATION**

**DATE: Oct 2016**

## ISOLATION & LOCK OUT

**Lack of Isolation continues to kill and seriously injure people in our industry.**

**Half a Second Rule:** It takes the brain half a second to react; unfortunately, most conveyor belts move almost an arms-length in less than that time, so you will be entangled in the conveyor by the belt no matter how experienced you are or how fast you think you can react – *the belt is moving faster than your brain can react* – the same applies to rollers, belt drives etc.



### Isolation

Along with electrical isolation always;

- Ensure stored energy is released or secured and locked off;
- Secure or release springs;
- Secure elevated parts or material;
- Stop and secure rotating flywheels;
- Relieve system pressure;
- Drain fluids;
- Vent gases (including pressure vessels);
- Allow system to cool.



(Note: this is not an exhaustive list)

Always carry out checks prior to commencing work on the equipment to ensure that the appropriate equipment is isolated.



- If in doubt about isolation, ask your supervisor or the person in charge.
- **Never** take a chance, always ensure the machine / equipment is isolated in accordance with the site rules (procedures).
- If more than one person is working on equipment, then each person must be individually covered by the isolation procedure.
- Good communication is essential between all parties involved in the operation.



### Cleaning / Maintenance / Repair

Before starting to work on a machine / equipment you must ensure;

- You are familiar with the isolation/maintenance procedures and any relevant risk assessments.
- You are permitted by management to work on the equipment.
- The machine and associated equipment is isolated and you are in compliance with all the isolation/lock-out rules (procedures).

**Remember to verify that the system has reduced to zero energy before starting to work on the equipment – where there is stored energy or risk of completion of stroke of equipment, the energy must be dissipated or measures taken to prevent movement of equipment during maintenance.**

- Never remove locks that have been put in place by someone else.
- Before bringing the isolated equipment back into service always;
  - Inspect the equipment and area;
  - Ensure all machine guards are in place and secured;
  - Ensure all personnel, tools and equipment are clear of the machine;
  - Ensure you are permitted to operate the equipment and inform the supervisor as appropriate;
  - Restore system connections;
  - Remove your own locks;
  - Restore equipment to 'normal' operation;
  - Conduct normal startup.
- Ensure that regular inspections are complete and records maintained to ensure that emergency stop devices such as conveyor pull-cords and emergency stop buttons are in place and are working.
- Permit to Work systems should be considered where hazardous maintenance activities are taking place and/or normal safeguards cannot be used, or where new hazards are introduced by the maintenance work.



**Disclaimer:** This bulletin has been prepared for the Irish Concrete Federation in consultation with the Federation's Health & Safety Committee and is issued for Guidance only. Members are reminded of the requirement to have Safe Operating Procedures as per the relevant Health & Safety Regulations. Every care has been taken to ensure that the information contained herein is correct and accurate at the date of publication. However, the Irish Concrete Federation cannot accept any responsibility or liability for any errors, inaccuracies or omissions which may have occurred inadvertently.

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