RM Insight®
Restarting 'idle' machinery – Beyond COVID-19

vero ▼
Committed to your success

The information in this document provides general guidance only. It provides a general list of what your business may need to consider from a risk control perspective when deciding to restart machinery. We have not considered your business' particular circumstances and any Government restrictions due to COVID-19 (which may change), and so you may need to consider how this applies in your circumstances, or if you need to seek appropriate professional advice. For any queries about insurance cover, please contact your insurer or insurance broker.

When Government restrictions are eased following the pandemic outbreak and businesses can re-open, it may not be as easy as returning to site and turning the machinery, gas, electricity and water services back on. The extent of recovery is dependent upon the extent the business went to in the closure. Vero produced an RM Insight article entitled *Shutting down machinery - The business fight against COVID-19* which provided risk control strategies and in turn provided for a clearer means of business resumption when available. In general terms, this article included: consultation with the original equipment manufacturer (OEM), removal of process materials, cover and protect against corrosion, separation of dissimilar metals, drain fuels, add rust inhibitors and desiccant packages (moisture absorption), provide periodic inspections/testing and most importantly the provision of a 'plant deactivation' register.

In general, it's important to reverse these actions that were taken to close the premises, along with other safeguards. To now prepare for and undertake the business recovery (once declared possible by the Government), here are some tips to consider in order to restart idle machinery.

Review the 'plant deactivation' list prior to commencing restart

The extent of recovery is obviously dependant upon the extent the business went to in shutting down the machinery. The 'deactivation list' clearly marked equipment to indicate

to operators involved with the future plant restart of what has been done to preserve the equipment (not documenting what has been done to equipment during the shutdown process can lead to situations being overlooked and ultimately damage equipment).

Consult OEM manuals for prestart and restart procedures

The original equipment manufacturers (OEM) describe best practice procedures to be followed.

Replace process materials

Within process vessels, tanks, pumps and pipework.

Remove protective covers

Remove covers from building air condition/ventilation vent openings that prevented entry by insects, rodents, birds and other animals.

Remove all protective coatings

These may have been applied to the surfaces of the machinery to prevent corrosion (e.g. protective waxes, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) coatings, plastic bags and films, powders etc.) and in turn remove all dust covers (e.g. heat-shrinkable plastic film over machines or components).

Boilers

Consult OEM manuals for start-up procedures and remove desiccant packages.

Check condition of lubricants within engines, compressors, gearboxes, bearings etc.

Conduct oil sample analysis for large

expensive equipment that has been idle for extended periods (>6 months). Replace or replenish as necessary.

Refrigeration plant

▼ clean air conditioning system condenser coils

▼ water chiller system condenser heat exchangers should be inspected prior to restart after extended outage (check for tube corrosion and condition of cathodic protection)

▼ ensure all refrigeration compressor crankcase heaters are turned on for a preset period (refer to OEM manual) prior to restart.

Electrical enclosures

Remove equipment enclosures (e.g. plastic wraps) and desiccant packages.

Electrical plant

Reinstate carbon brushes and remove desiccant packages. Remove all 'lock-outs/tag-outs'.

Before starting machinery, including refrigeration systems, refer to the Vero *Information guide: How to conduct plant and machinery safety risk assessments;* and self-inspection checklist: *Inspection and maintenance of refrigeration systems.*

Once the business is back up and running, review the business continuity plan. What worked well and what didn't? Revise the plan based on lessons learned. Refer to Vero's RM Insight article: *Organisational resilience* and the self-inspection checklist *Business continuity planning for small businesses.*

For more information:
www.vero.com.au/vero/business-insurance/risk-management
Contact us at riskengineering@vero.com.au

---

vero.com.au