
Getting Your Equipment Operating Again

Your equipment and machinery may have been idle for several months during the COVID-19 quarantine. Make sure you are restarting safely by using the following guidelines.

Begin with an assessment of your facilities, including electricity, gas, water, and other services. These were probably not shut down, but they may have been damaged or were left idle. Review services for leaks and appropriate amounts of fuel if necessary. Confirm that equipment has cycled regularly also. Perform any necessary maintenance before returning to full operation and your site's regular maintenance schedule.

Be prepared for another shutdown. Assess your emergency equipment, including generators and first-aid materials, and refresh it if needed. A qualified technician should conduct or observe testing of all equipment to make sure it is operating within original equipment manufacturer (OEM) standards.

Restoring Unused Equipment to Service

Before reactivating your equipment, confirm that it is clean and ready to operate. Check the following:

- Oil, fuel, and other liquids are at maximum levels
- Equipment is free of debris and dust
- Appropriate protection is in place, both on the equipment and available to the user

A sample startup checklist including these steps and more is available with this guide.

Your equipment may have OEM instructions or guidelines on starting or maintaining it, which you can also use as a reference.

You may need to operate a machine at a slower speed or inspect it more frequently after starting it again until you are confident that it is safe to use at its normal capability.

Restoring Repurposed Equipment to Service

If your equipment was repurposed during the quarantine for another use (for example, to manufacture essential medical supplies), you may need to make adjustments to your equipment to restore it.

If you made a list of steps taken to repurpose the equipment, you can follow those steps to change the equipment back to its original purpose. The OEM instructions for the equipment will also show how to maintain and correctly operate it. Make note of any differences between how the equipment was operating while it was repurposed and how it should operate to identify any challenges you might face when restoring the equipment to use.

Don't forget to check fluid levels and machine parts that can easily become worn like chains and bearings. This equipment might have seen heavy use while other equipment at your worksite was idle.