

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: *Preventative Maintenance*

When we got to the subject of clutch jacks, the repair shop owner stopped us in our tracks and said, "I don't need a clutch jack, I've got Tommy," He then proceeded to point to a very large young man out in the shop. He was proud to tell us that Tommy could balance the clutch assembly on his chest and just press it into place for installation. I don't think it was that easy for Tommy because he was one of the dirtiest young men I've ever seen. Over the years, whenever I received an industry notice of a serious workers compensation claim, my thoughts always went to the repair shop technicians, like Tommy, who were not provided with the right tools to get the job done "safely."



At NORCO, our building and manufacturing equipment preventative maintenance program operates on a very detailed schedule because of the high value involved. But I've noticed that preventative maintenance efforts performed on the repair shop equipment are sometimes neglected because, as I've heard, "it's just a \$200 jack." However, as I look around the shop, I don't see just a \$200 jack. I see tens of thousands of dollars worth of shop equipment that need to be protected.

## What's in it for me?

I started making a list of the benefits of a properly operating maintenance program:

**Decreased Downtime.** *Equipment downtime is decreased as major repairs on equipment are reduced.*

**Longer Product Life.** *Life expectancy of equipment is increased, thereby eliminating the need for premature replacement.*

**Reduced Overtime Costs.** *Reduce overtime costs and have a more economical use of maintenance staff by working on a scheduled basis, rather than an emergency basis to repair unexpected breakdowns.*

**Less Repairs.** *Timely, routine repairs circumvent large-scale more costly repairs.*

**Better Work Environment.** *Improved safety and quality conditions for your techs.*

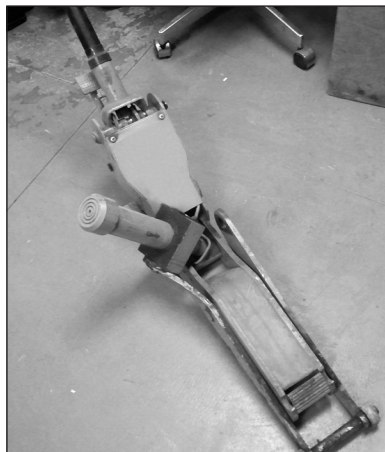
So if we know these things, and the benefits are there, why don't we always do them? Lack of planning is the answer. If you want to keep your tools in good shape, you need a plan. Take a few moments to look over your shop equipment at regular intervals. "But it takes so much time!" is what I hear. The truth is you don't have time not to. Time is what it takes to investigate a lost time injury. Time is what it takes to investigate damage to a customer's car when something breaks. That's "time." Time invested to prevent an accident is far less costly than the time that you will spend after an incident. Safety is no accident. It takes planning.

## Yikes!

Below are a few pictures to illustrate how a preventative maintenance plan could SAVE you time and MONEY.



*Momentarily after lifting a very large forklift, there was a loud bang and the load dropped. Upon further investigation, it was determined that a bolt had backed out of the threads and when the lifting began, the bolt was only being held by a thread or two.*

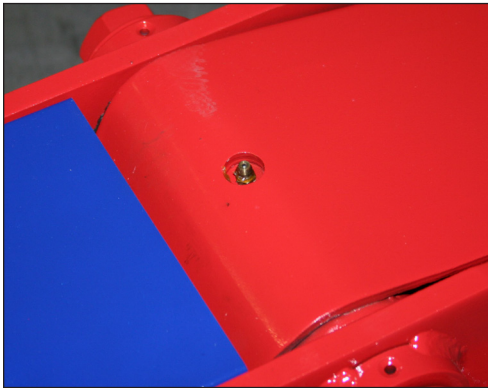


*When the pressure of the load was placed on the jack, the bolt "blew out" and the load collapsed. Luckily no one was hurt and the forklift was not damaged. But the costs could have been greater. Had someone routinely given the jack a "look over" he may have noted the bolt not completely seated and prevented the accident.*

## We have a few recommendations to help prevent this from happening in your shop:

**Store your equipment properly.** Always store the jack in a well protected area where it will not be exposed to inclement weather, corrosive vapors, abrasive dust, or any other harmful elements. Simply, keep your products indoors, away from rain and snow.

**Lubricate and look.** You should always lubricate areas of wear. Manufacturers identify for you the grease fittings, wheels, and extension screws where grease should be applied. But make sure that you do not lubricate any portion of the lift saddle! Grease should only be applied where it is supposed to be applied! While you're looking at the product and deciding where lube needs to be applied, look the product over. Are all fasteners tight? Are all the wheels and casters freewheeling?



**Keep oil in the reservoir.** It should not be necessary to refill or top off the reservoir with hydraulic fluid unless there is an external leak. An external leak requires immediate repair which must be performed in a dirt-free environment by qualified hydraulic repair personnel who are familiar with this equipment. **NORCO Authorized Service Centers** are recommended.

**Maintain your labels.** Every jack owner is responsible for keeping the jack label clean and readable. Use a mild soap solution to wash external surfaces of the jack, but not any moving hydraulic components. There is good information on the product labels that is there to protect the user.

“When Safety Counts on Performance” is not just some tagline. It truly represents what we are here at **NORCO**. That’s why we post all of our operations manuals on the web. Have them readily available for all of your shop equipment.

While planning helps drive your success, you’ve got to implement your plans to truly be successful. So plan on doing some preventative maintenance this year and enjoy the savings that come from longer equipment life and a safer work environment.