



EASTERN & WESTERN REGIONS  
OPERATING PRACTICES

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

**SYSTEM NOTICE NO. 980**  
**ALL CONCERNED:**

**ALL DIVISIONS**

**Educational Reminder: Hard-to-Line Switches**

Switch-related injuries are commonly the result of overexertion, an attempt (or sometimes repeated attempts) to force the switch points into position when the handle, rod or other parts of the mechanism are stiff or binding.

The "ease" in which a switch will operate is somewhat subjective, depending on such factors as the operator's size and relative strength. However, instructions included in GOI 8 12.7, are designed to ensure employees can safely line switches without overexerting and without risking injury. Just as importantly, a reporting process was created to get those that are hard-to-line repaired, *before* an injury can occur.

Always inspect the switch prior to lining; this is especially important during the winter months. Observe the switch components to see if they are obstructed with ice and snow. If they are, use the provided switch brooms to clean the switch.

In all cases when inspecting switches, remain vigilant to your surroundings. Expect movement at any time, in any track and in either direction. Winter clothing and conditions may reduce visibility, remember to review your surroundings at least every 15 seconds to maintain awareness.

As a reminder, the following hard-to-line switch reporting process must be followed:

**GOI 8.12.7 HAND-OPERATED SWITCHES**

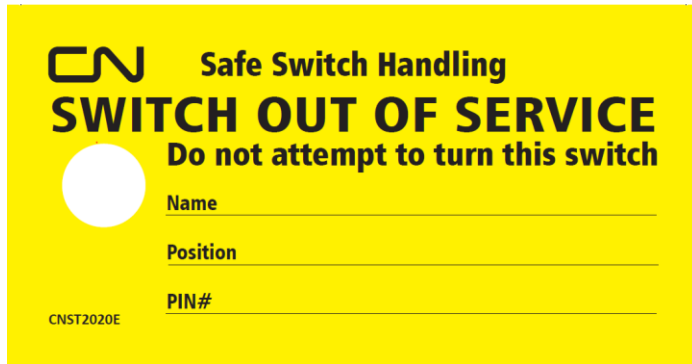
A switch that requires excessive force to operate, must not be lined. To ensure other employees do not attempt to line the switch, it must be tagged and reported for repair.

1. Out of service tag is applied by the employee directly to the switch lock, keeper/hook. If a tag is not available a b/o tag can be used.
2. Employee reports to S&C Call Desk
  - Report to Include – Sub, Mile, Station, Switch ID, Defect, Reporting employees Name, position and PINNote: Terminals where yardmaster is on duty 24/7 – report directly to yardmaster or terminal coordinator

Radio instructions - Reporting Issues by calling the S&C Call Desk at

- Radio: Select the RTC channel and dial \*4# or \*5099# from a radio.

Tags – available in booking in rooms (bad order tags may be used if switch tags are not available)



All injuries are preventable. Do your part to protect both yourselves and others – when you find a switch is harder to line than expected, don't force it. Tag it out and report it.

**Signed: D. Hoziel – Senior Manager Operating Practices**