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# Loading Dock Leveler Hydraulic Cylinder Inspection And Lube

## 1.0 Objective & Scope

The objective of this procedure is to ensure that all hydraulic cylinders on loading dock levelers are inspected for leaks, wear, and proper operation, and are lubricated according to manufacturer specifications. This SOP applies to all field technicians performing routine maintenance on dock levelers at customer sites across Canada. The Lead Installer or designated technician is responsible for completing this task and documenting results in SiteQueue.

## 2.0 Required Equipment & Tools

- Mobile tablet with SiteQueue application installed and logged in
- Hydraulic cylinder inspection checklist (digital or printed)
- Flashlight or headlamp for visual inspection
- Clean rags or shop towels
- Hydraulic fluid (as specified by manufacturer, e.g., ISO 32 or AW 32)
- Lubricating grease gun with NLGI #2 lithium-based grease
- Grease fittings adapter (if needed)
- Wrench set (metric and imperial, as required)
- Torque wrench (if specified by manufacturer)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE): safety glasses, high-visibility vest, steel-toed boots, cut-resistant gloves
- Spill kit (absorbent pads, containment boom, disposal bags)
- Lockout/tagout kit (padlock, hasp, danger tag)

## 3.0 Site Safety & Hazard Assessment

- High-visibility vest and steel-toed boots are mandatory in all loading dock areas. Safety glasses must be worn at all times during inspection and lubrication.
- Conduct a site-specific hazard assessment: identify overhead obstructions, moving vehicles, forklift traffic, and uneven surfaces. Establish a safe work zone with cones or barriers if necessary.
- Ensure the dock leveler is de-energized and locked out using the facility's lockout/tagout procedure before any inspection or lubrication begins. Verify zero energy state by attempting to operate the leveler.
- Hydraulic fluid under pressure can cause serious injury. Never loosen fittings or lines while the system is pressurized. Relieve pressure by cycling the leveler (if safe) or following manufacturer depressurization steps.
- Be aware of pinch points between the dock leveler and the dock face. Keep hands and tools clear of moving parts during operation checks.
- Spill response: if hydraulic fluid leaks, contain immediately using absorbent pads. Report any spills to the site supervisor and follow facility spill reporting procedures.

## 4.0 Step-by-Step Execution Procedure

1. Arrive at the loading dock and notify the site supervisor or dock manager of your presence and the scheduled maintenance. Confirm the dock leveler is not in use and will remain out of service for the duration of the task.
2. Perform lockout/tagout: locate the main electrical disconnect for the dock leveler, turn it off, and apply a personal padlock and danger tag. Test that the leveler does not operate by pressing the control button or using the manual release.
3. Visually inspect the hydraulic cylinder for external leaks. Wipe the cylinder rod and barrel clean with a rag. Look for puddles, drips, or wet spots around seals, fittings, and the rod wiper seal. Note any signs of corrosion or physical damage.
4. Check the hydraulic fluid level in the reservoir (if accessible). Use the dipstick or sight glass to verify fluid is within the recommended range. If low, add the specified hydraulic fluid. Record the fluid type and amount added in SiteQueue.
5. Inspect all hydraulic hoses and fittings for cracks, abrasions, bulges, or loose connections. Tighten any loose fittings with the appropriate wrench. Replace any hose that shows signs of wear or damage. Document any replacements.
6. Lubricate the cylinder pivot points and rod end clevis. Locate all grease fittings (zerk fittings) on the cylinder mounts and linkage. Wipe fittings clean, then apply grease using a grease gun until fresh grease purges from the joint. Wipe away excess grease.
7. Manually cycle the dock leveler (if safe and permitted by lockout/tagout procedure) to distribute lubricant and check for smooth operation. Listen for unusual noises such as grinding, squealing, or knocking. Observe the cylinder for any new leaks during movement.
8. Inspect the cylinder rod for scoring, pitting, or chrome flaking. Run a clean rag along the rod to feel for any rough spots. If damage is found, note the severity and recommend repair or replacement in the inspection report.
9. Check the cylinder mounting bolts and brackets for tightness and signs of fatigue. Use a torque wrench if specified. Tighten any loose bolts to manufacturer specifications. Document any adjustments made.
10. Clean up the work area: remove all tools, rags, and debris. Dispose of used rags and any spilled fluids according to site hazardous waste procedures. Remove lockout/tagout devices only after confirming the area is clear and all personnel are accounted for.
11. Restore power to the dock leveler and perform a full operational test. Cycle the leveler through its full range of motion (raise, lower, extend lip) while observing for smooth operation, unusual sounds, or fluid leaks. Verify the leveler returns to the stored position correctly.
12. Complete the digital inspection checklist in SiteQueue. Include photos of the cylinder, fittings, fluid level, and any issues found. Note the date, time, technician name, and equipment serial number. Submit the report.

## 5.0 Verification, Sign-off & Reporting

1. Review the completed inspection and lubrication with the site supervisor or dock manager. Walk them through any findings, including minor issues, replacements, or recommendations for future service.
2. Obtain the customer's digital signature in SiteQueue confirming that the work was performed satisfactorily and that the dock leveler is safe to operate. If any deficiencies were noted, ensure the customer acknowledges them and understands any operational restrictions.
3. Upload all required documentation: completed checklist, photos, fluid type and amount added, parts replaced (if any), and the customer signature. Close the work order in SiteQueue.
4. If any critical safety issues were identified (e.g., major hydraulic leak, structural damage), immediately notify the site supervisor and your dispatch team. Do not leave the equipment in an unsafe state. Tag the leveler out of service and escalate per company policy.
5. File a copy of the inspection report in the company's maintenance management system for future reference and compliance audits. Ensure all records are retained per Transport Canada and local regulations.

**Regulatory Disclaimer:** This document is a generic site management template provided for educational purposes. The end-user assumes all liability for reviewing, adapting, and validating all field protocols against local site requirements.