Plant Maintenance Shutdown

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Spring Cleaning

Think of a scheduled maintenance and plant shutdown project as spring cleaning on a huge scale. Also commonly known as a plant overhaul, the temporary shutdown [1] of a production plant or factory is an enormous undertaking and one that requires careful and systematic planning prior to performing the task. Any temporary shutdown of a plant or factory is an extremely expensive occurrence, whether emergency in nature or planned for two years. Studies have demonstrated, however, that the short-term expenses are more than offset by improved plant efficiency, improved operations, lower energy use [2], and markedly fewer unexpected mechanical failures.

Planning to Close

Planning to close for a scheduled maintenance will require more than flipping a sign on the front door to read, "Closed—Back Tomorrow at 9 a.m." Rather, one of the ironies of a plant shutdown is that your employee workforce and necessary adjunct employees will probably work faster, harder and with more overtime than during a period of normal operations.

Because of higher numbers of contracted employees and the faster work pace necessary to control costs, safety considerations also become markedly more important as these are all situations that can easily lead to injuries and dangerous working conditions. A primary aspect of a plant turnaround is determining and obtaining the necessary safety equipment [3] to protect workers as they repair, clean and tune up machinery.

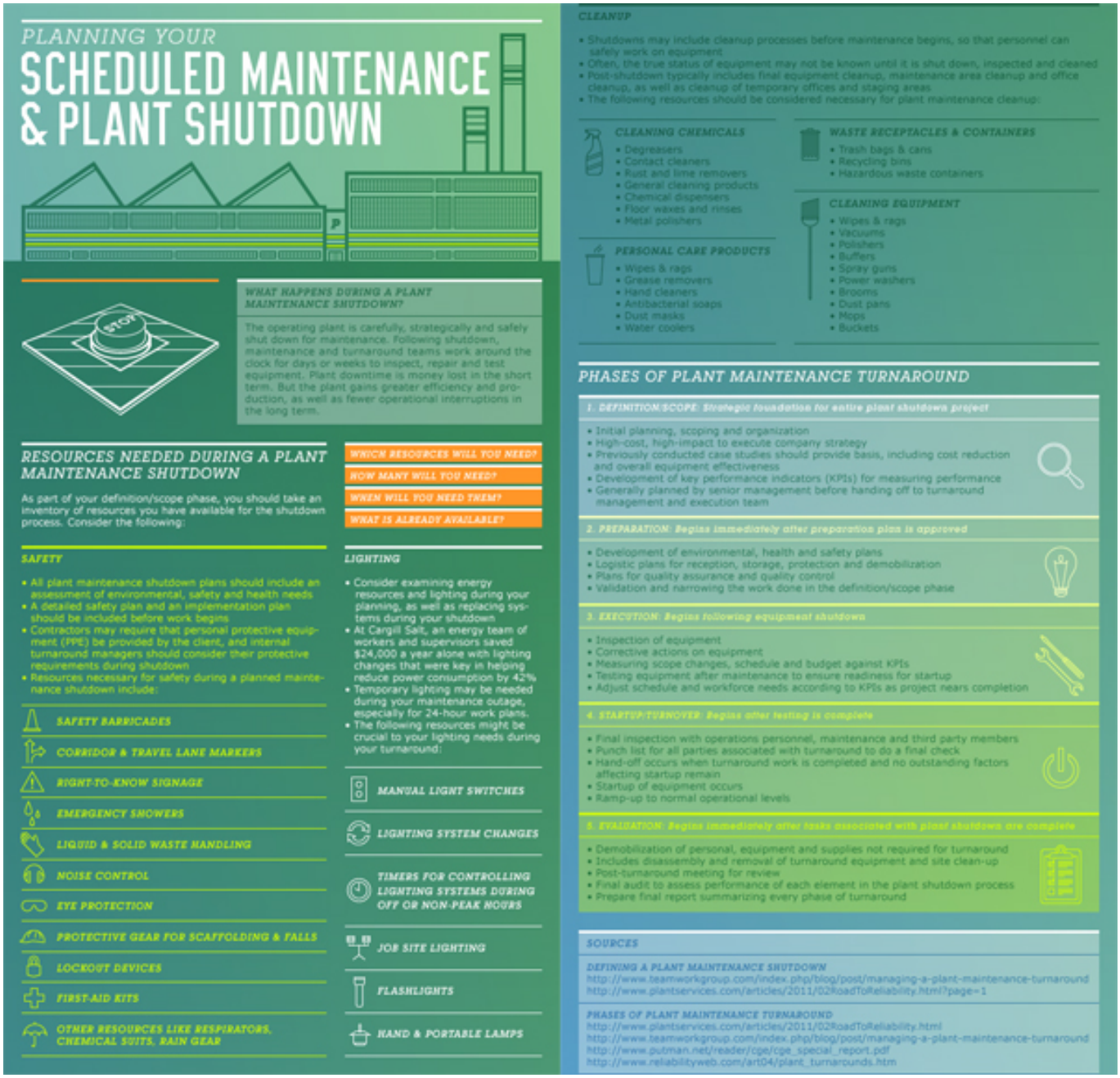
Necessary Supplies

In addition to safety equipment deemed necessary by overhaul consultants or factory managers, cleaning supplies are also a must. Cleaning solvents or solutions must be safe for workers to use and appropriate to the type of machinery in question. Often, a re-evaluation of the necessary length of a plant shutdown is necessary after an initial cleaning is conducted, as it's only then that necessary repairs may become apparent.

Planning, Planning and More Planning

The greater time and attention to detail spent in the planning phase of a plant overhaul is usually inversely related to the length of the project's actual downtime. Research, plan and investigate ahead of time in order to minimize lost time and profits

Planning Your Scheduled Maintenance & Plant Shutdown. Click the image to see it at full size.



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