

## Electrocution

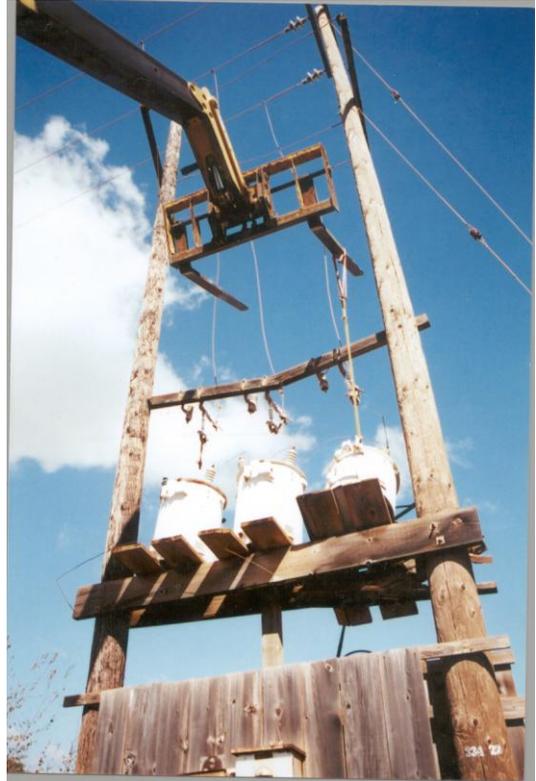
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A 63-year old linesman was killed in late 2005 while cutting the lines to a transformer bank. The employee was one of a crew of three assigned to remove the transformer bank because the wood supporting structure had rotted and the transformers were in danger of falling. Although the victim had been working for this employer for only a few years, he had over 25 years of experience as a linesman for another employer.

Prior to arriving at the site, a co-worker had confirmed that the power was turned off and locked out. However, as the forklift was moved into position to hold up the transformers, one of the forks came into contact with a line resulting in blue sparks.

The employee, standing on a fiberglass ladder, decided to get a hot stick to pull the cut off fuses, but because of the deterioration and rust, could only pull 1 of 3 fuses. He then tried to remove the lower taps with a socket wrench. He had forgotten his hot work gloves at the shop, but reassured his co-worker that the trick to doing the job safely is to squeeze hard on the wrench. This would minimize the “tingle” from contacting the hot lines.

He cut the first line, the one where the fuse was removed, without any problems. He then cut the middle line. Nothing happened. As he cut the last line on the right, it is believed that his chest came into contact with a conduit pipe weather head. The path to ground was complete and he was knocked to the ground. Police and ambulance were called and the victim was pronounced dead at the scene.



Citations were issued in the amount of \$1,500.

### Recommendations:

1. Lockout/tagout procedures to isolate equipment from energy should consider all potential sources of energy. Apparently, some re-wiring was done in the past, so that the cut-off switches were by-passed.
2. Employees regularly working with electricity should always verify that the equipment is isolated by the use of a meter.
3. Proper work procedures should always be followed, including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment while doing hot work.
4. Employers should not rely on safety training provided by a previous employer. It is the responsibility of the current employer to verify and evaluate past training and re-train if necessary.