

news & notes

ARC FLASH ALLIANCE

In May, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Region 5 office announced that it has renewed its alliance with the Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Trust (EJATT) in Alsip, Illinois, to help protect electrical workers from arc blast, arc flash, and other hazards associated with the installation and maintenance of electrical systems.

Under the alliance, OSHA and EJATT will present training programs, hold forums and meetings on the hazards associated with arc blast and arc flash, and work to develop resources to help employers protect workers from these hazards. In addition, according to OSHA, the alliance is focused on promoting a cooperative relationship between labor and management and encouraging worker participation in safety efforts.

Kathy Webb, OSHA's area director in Calumet City, Illinois, commented, "The renewal of this alliance reflects the importance of electrical worker safety and health. . . . This alliance will continue to help develop effective training programs, while opening the lines of communication between OSHA, employers, and workers."



The biggest danger in the classical music scene is sudden arc flashes between conductors.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

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Are you protected from arc flash?

Know the hazards and precautions

Arc flash is a short circuit, or electric arc, that travels through the air between conductors or from a conductor to the ground. Arc flash incidents can damage equipment and cause fatalities and severe injuries, including burns, hearing loss, eye injuries, nerve damage, and cardiac arrest.

Causes of arc flash include:

- Tools being dropped on conductors, circuit breakers, or other energized parts;
- Improper work procedures, such as working on energized equipment when it should have been de-energized or locked out; *and*
- Buildup of dust, impurities, and corrosion on insulating surfaces.

To protect yourself from arc flash, de-energizing equipment before beginning work is the most effective strategy. If you're a qualified worker to work on energized equipment, use personal protective equipment (PPE) and electrical protective equipment such as insulated footwear and gloves, nonconductive tools, and flame-resistant clothing to reduce the hazard. Also, follow safe work practices and use all PPE and other equipment properly.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently updated its standard for electrical power generation, distribution, and transmission. The revised rule, which includes revisions to the requirements for electrical protective equipment, takes effect July 1, 2014, with some provisions scheduled to become effective April 1, 2015.

Take these precautions when you work on energized electrical equipment:

- **Always inspect equipment and work areas** for arc flash hazards and risks when you enter an area with live electrical equipment.
- **Whenever possible, always de-energize and lock out equipment** before performing work on it.
- **Wear all required PPE**, and inspect it before each use to make sure it is in good condition and rated for the specific use that your work calls for.
- **Exercise caution and follow safe work practices.** Human error, such as dropped tools, contact with electrical parts, and wrong test equipment, is a major cause of arc flash incidents.
- **Report and do not use damaged electrical equipment**, testing equipment, and other tools.

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SAFWAY SAFETY

Safway's self-described "obsession" with worker protection has led the company to launch a national initiative to prevent falls. The company (www.safway.com/) partners with OSHA, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and the Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR) to reduce falls.

Hundreds of workers are killed and more than 200,000 are seriously injured each year in falls to the same or lower levels. And the financial burden—about \$70 billion per year—is staggering. Safway Group's Vice President of Safety Paul Amedee says the biggest factor in fall elimination is developing a strong culture, not just corporately, but within the subcultures at jobsites.

"When safety is infused throughout an organization's culture on every level, everyone from employees to customers and shareholders wins," he adds.

Safway operates its own training university and has trained more than 40,000 of its own workers and 40,000 client employees. Safway has partnered with Honeywell to develop fall protection gear to assist compliance with Safway's 100% fall protection policy.



Cycling safety

Be careful on bikes

Plan your route. Work out a bike-friendly route before your ride. Find side streets, bike lanes, and bike paths rather than heavily traveled "main drags."

Ride in the road. Beginning bikers may think sidewalks are safer, but bicycles belong—and are actually safer—in the roadway, following normal traffic rules.

Inspect your bike. Make sure that:

- Your tires are properly inflated.
- Your brakes work.
- Your chain is properly seated.
- Your quick-releases are closed.

Take care of your bike. Get an annual inspection at a bike shop.

Stay visible. Wear light-colored clothing in dusk and darkness, and use flashing lights on the front and back of your bike to make yourself easier to see.

Communicate. Use eye contact, hand signals, and a bike bell to let others know where you are and what you're about to do.

Take up space. If you're riding along a line of parked cars, you're vulnerable to "dooming"—colliding with a car door when someone who doesn't see you opens it. Give parked cars a wide berth, even if it means that cars driving in your lane cannot pass.

Stay in control. Always go slowly enough that you can stop, turn, or maneuver as needed.

Be watchful. Look out for potholes and other roadway hazards and obstructions, and give yourself enough reaction time to avoid them safely.

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The rocket's red glare

July is Fireworks Safety Month

Before you light fireworks:

- Check the label. Legal fireworks have the name of the manufacturer, the words "Class C Common Fireworks," and a warning on the label.
- Put pets indoors (they may become frightened by the noise).
- Keep a bucket of water nearby in which to place all used fireworks.
- Have a water hose or fire extinguisher nearby to put out stray sparks.
- Clear a level area away from things that can burn.
- Teach attendees to "stop, drop, and roll" if their clothes catch on fire.

When lighting fireworks:

- Have a designated adult light all fireworks.
- Wear safety goggles.
- Light one at a time, move away quickly, and keep at a safe distance until the display has finished.
- Use fireworks (including sparklers) only outdoors and away from anything that can burn.
- Never throw fireworks, and never hold them in your hand after lighting.

After you finish:

- Clean up all debris.
- Duds can be dangerous too. If a device doesn't light or fire, an adult should wait at least 5 minutes, approach it carefully, and place it in a bucket of water.