

SAFETY MATTERS

Electrical Safety Do's and Don'ts

Did you know that May is Electrical Safety Month?

Each year, hundreds of lives are lost and thousands more people are injured in needless electricity related accidents. The following list of workplace safety considerations was provided by the National Electrical Safety Foundation. Use this list to check your electricity safety awareness.

- ❑ Plan every job and think about what could go wrong.
- ❑ Use the right tools for the job.
- ❑ Use procedures, drawings, and other documents to do the job.
- ❑ Isolate equipment from energy sources.
- ❑ Identify the electrical shock and arc flash, as well as other hazards that may be present.
- ❑ Minimize hazards by guarding or establishing approach limitations.
- ❑ Test every circuit and conductor before you touch it.
- ❑ Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as a last line of defense in case something goes wrong.
- ❑ Be sure you are properly trained and qualified for the job.
- ❑ Work on electrical equipment and conductors only when de-energized, unless procedures and safeguards have been established to ensure zero exposure for the worker and other people in the area.
- ❑ Lockout/tagout and ground (where appropriate) before working on equipment.
- ❑ Treat de-energized electrical equipment and conductors as energized until lockout/tagout, test, and ground procedures (where appropriate) are implemented.
- ❑ Wear protective clothing and equipment and use insulated tools in areas where there are possible electrical hazards.
- ❑ De-energize and visibly guard (where possible) whenever contact with uninsulated overhead power lines is possible.
- ❑ Check and double check safety regulations when a ladder or parts of any vehicle or mechanical equipment structure will be elevated near energized overhead power lines. Call your local electric utility for assistance. People standing on the ground may be particularly vulnerable to possible injury.

Cords, Equipment, and Tool Grounding

- ❑ Protect flexible cords and cables from physical damage. Check cords for cut, broken, or cracked insulation.
- ❑ Keep slack in flexible cords to prevent tension on electrical terminals.
- ❑ Make sure the insulating qualities of a splice are equal to or greater than the original cord.

- ❑ Extension cords are for temporary use. Install permanent wiring when use is no longer temporary.
- ❑ Verify that all three-wire tools and equipment are grounded.
- ❑ Water, electrical equipment, and power cords do not mix! Use GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters) protection in wet or damp environments.
- ❑ Ground exposed parts of fixed equipment that could be energized.
- ❑ Use non-conductive tools whenever possible.
- ❑ Always double check the operation of your voltage testers by testing a live circuit.