

General Electrical Safety Tips

Practicing electrical safety should be paramount in all situations. We are around and use electrical equipment or energized materials daily. Way too often we take this electrical exposure for granted. We don't always consider electrical hazards such as burns, shocks and electrocution (death) that can be associated with electricity. It's important to take electrical safety serious. Following are a few tips on how to be safe with electricity:

- Assume all overhead wires are energized at deadly voltages.
- If an overhead power line is down, don't touch it. Call the electric utility company to report the fallen line.
- Always stay at least 10 feet away from overhead wires. Make sure the area is clear before handling long objects or working at heights.
- If an overhead wire were to fall across your vehicle while driving, DO NOT get out, continue to drive away from the line. If the engine stalls, stay inside of the vehicle and warn others not to touch the vehicle or the wire. Either call or ask another person to call the local electric utility company and emergency services.
- Never use electrical equipment when standing in water.
- Only qualified and authorized personnel should repair electrical cords or equipment.
- If electrical equipment has gotten wet, have a qualified electrician inspect the equipment before energizing it.
- Inspect electrical equipment and cords when working in damp conditions to make sure they are free of defects and in good condition, and use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- When working around electricity you should always use caution.

When conducting activities around energized materials or using electrical equipment, safety should always come first. Getting in a hurry, taking short cuts, getting distracted or simply not paying attention can lead to serious injury or even death. It's just not worth it. Being observant of your surroundings, planning your activities and taking precautionary measures can go a long way into getting tasks completed without incident. These tips can be helpful in reducing unnecessary exposures or injuries. Remember, a big part of being safe is being alert and prepared.

References:

OSHA Quick Card 3294-04R-13, Electrical Safety

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