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# **GRAYS HARBOR PUD**

# **ACCIDENT**

**September 29, 2011**

**Investigated and Reported by  
Dale Benner  
IBEW Local 77 Journeyman Lineman & Accident Investigator**

## ELECTRICAL CONTACT ACCIDENT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 29, 2011

At approximately 7:30 AM on Thursday, September 29, an electrical contact accident occurred involving a Grays Harbor County PUD Journeyman Lineman. The crew included 1 foreman, 2 journeyman linemen, 1 line equipment operator, 1 groundman and 2 flaggers. The crew was called in around 4:30 AM to repair a no power with wire down. When the crew arrived at the Aberdeen Headquarters, the foreman went to Dispatch for information on the outage, where it was located, which circuits were involved and to obtain the maps of the area involved. The foreman returned to the crew with the circuit maps which all crew members reviewed. The foreman showed them the clearance points. The 2 linemen then went to look at the job site. They checked opens and tagged as needed. They also showed the 2 flaggers where the job was located and how they wanted the work zone set up for flagging. The 2 linemen also checked to see if any further materials were needed.

The 2 linemen arrived at the job site and instructed the flaggers on how they wanted the traffic control set up and check for materials. The 2 linemen then went to check the opens and found that there were multiple opens involved, which took some time. They also met with a service lineman to review what switching he had performed and see which had been tagged as opens. They then went to the nearby substation (Scott Street Substation) to confirm status of the breakers involved (Scott #6 and #3). The 2 linemen then discussed the substation's status with the service lineman.

After reviewing all of the opens and the substation with the service lineman, they returned to the other crew members at the job site. The 2 linemen and the foreman reviewed all of the opens, what had been tagged and switched and the status of the Scott substation. The foreman proceeded with his tailboard with all of the crew members and explained the plan to make the repair, i.e. where the grounds were to be installed (one span east pole #62), status of circuit #6 and circuit #3, dead ends on the north side of breaker # 63 and the pole they were going to be working on. He explained that circuit #3 was still hot. The foreman stressed there was no need to go to the north side of the pole (#63) because it was still hot and all of the work was going to take place on the south side of the pole, using the pole as a barrier.

The crew began to install the grounds on pole #62 - one span east of pole #63, then set up bucket on the south side of pole #63 to begin working. After completing the work on pole #63, they dropped out the hand line (which usually indicates to the crew members on the ground that the work has been done). Then, before going to the ground, Lineman #1 noticed a loose fargo on one of the jumpers on the north side of the pole and he told Lineman #2 he was going to fix it. Lineman #2 was bent down in the bucket when he looked up to see where he was. Lineman #1 had put them right up in the hot wires on the north side of the pole. Lineman #2 looked to see if he was in the clear and when he looked at Lineman #1, he could only see his back side as his view was blocked.

Lineman #1 said he had already tightened one fargo and when he went to knock the other fargo off line (because it was burned up), contact was made. Lineman #1 fell back into the bucket, pinning Lineman #2 to the other side. Lineman #2 yelled down to the ground to call 911, that Lineman #1 had been hit and to get him down. The foreman called dispatch to call 911 and the line equipment operator ran over to the bucket where he jumped up on the bucket, put it on the lower controls and moved the bucket down out of the hot wires. When the 2 linemen came down a short distance, Lineman #2 was able to take over the controls and lowered the bucket to the deck. Lineman #1 was awake and alert the entire time and yelled to the other crew members to get him out of the bucket.

The goundman and the service groundman lifted the injured lineman out of the bucket and placed him on the deck just as the paramedics were arriving (they were just a few blocks away from the job site). The injured lineman was transported to the local hospital and was later airlifted to Harborview.

Both lineman #1 and lineman #2 were wearing all of the correct PPE, hard hats, FR clothing, gloves, harness, etc. Lineman #1 received 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns on his left side and left hand. He is currently under a doctor's care, awaiting surgery on his hand and the side of his body.

In conclusion: Stick to the plan discussed in tailboard. If you make changes outside of original tailboard, talk to everyone involved (WAC 296-45-135 (1)). Also, cover may be needed to remind you what is hot so you can see how much clearance you have or minimum approach distance (WAC 296-45-324 (4) Table 1. Finally, don't wear any conductive articles (WAC 296-45-325 (12)) when doing hot work as they may add to injuries.

Report submitted by:

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