

IBEW LOCAL 77
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Job Location: Hay, WA
Utility Property: Inland Power and Light
Employer: Mountain Power Const.
General Foreman:
Foreman:
Journeyman Lineman:
Hot Apprentice:
Cold Apprentice:
Date of Accident: December 10, 2009
Date of Investigation: December 21, 2009
Accident Investigated By: John Logan (Business Rep. Local 77)
Injured Worker:
Time Loss: None

The crew was assigned the Job of installing a new pole mounted, 3 phase, Gang operated Switch on a de-energized 69KV circuit, and transfer the existing wire into the new Switch position.

The 69KV line was adjacent to an energized Substation with two (2) separate 3 phase distribution circuits running parallel to each other and under the 69KV span to be worked on.

The 69KV conductors to be worked on were grounded. Two grounding jumpers to short the phases and one grounding jumper from the phases to the structure down guy.

The crew placed protective cover on the 3 phase distribution circuit closest to the work area but did not have enough cover for the circuit farther away. (Both distribution circuits were perpendicular to, and under the 69KV span being worked on).

The crew had already installed the new switch, and had begun the process of transferring the dead-ended conductors from the pole position to the new switch position.

While transferring the conductor, the strap hoist and sling parted and the grounded conductor came in contact with the uncovered distribution circuit farthest away. The Hot Apprentice held the conductor up and clear while the journeyman reattached the sling and hoist.

While the conductor was being moved in the air, the cold apprentice was on the ground working on the down guy/ground rod and became the second path to ground when the down guy/ground rod became energized.

When asked if he was OK the cold apprentice replied "I got hit". At the insistence of the injured apprentice he was not taken to the hospital. The crew finished the day and went home for the weekend.

The injured apprentice took himself to the hospital on Saturday (three days later) because of chest pains. He was checked out and released the same day, and all tests were negative. He returned to work on Monday.

Issues of concern:

1. NOT ENOUGH PROTECTIVE COVER
2. IMPROPER GROUNDING PROCEDURE
3. IMPROPER GROUNDING EQUIPMENT
4. FAILURE TO REPORT THE ACCIDENT IMMEDIATELY