

FERRY COUNTY PUD

ACCIDENT

MARCH 26, 2008

Investigated and Reported by
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IBEW Local 77 Accident Investigators

On March 26, 2008 a fatal accident occurred with a Journeymen Lineman (Serviceman) from Ferry County PUD, while removing a danger tree on south Clark Street also known as Highway 20.

The removal of this tree was a joint project between the PUD, DOT and the City. The crew consisted of a Foreman, a Serviceman and a Lineman. There also were four Flaggers from the DOT and a City employee assisting in the joint project.

The crew discussed removing the danger tree on south Clark St; they discussed where the rigging was going to go and where the two parts of the one tree were going to be felled. A $\frac{3}{4}$ " rope was placed in the north stem and it fell right where the crew wanted it to. The crew then rigged the south stem and discussed its path to ground. A $\frac{3}{4}$ " rope was placed in the south stem rigged towards the south. The $\frac{1}{2}$ " cable (coming from the winch on the bucket) was then rigged to hold the leaning tree from breaking the holding wood and falling on the Highway.

The Serviceman had the Foreman bring the line up tight and pull just a little more to check their rigging. They discussed that they would come up on the line a little more as the tree began to fall.

The Serviceman put in the under cut working from the high side of the tree, he started the back cut and after he was two-thirds of the way through the cut, he began to move away from the tree. He looked toward the Highway then turned around and went up the hill and disappeared. When the tree hit the ground the Foreman and the Lineman could not see the Serviceman so they both ran to where they had last seen him.

They found the Serviceman pinned under the butt end of the tree. They checked his pulse immediately and found a faint pulse in his neck and the City employee found one in his wrist.

The Foreman then grabbed the chainsaw and immediately cut off a 4' to 5' piece of the log. At this time a female bystander who observed the accident came across the street from the gas station to assist them. The City Chief of Police arrived with an AED. The City employee and the female bystander started CPR then used the AED (it was stated that the AED shocked the Serviceman once and it did not help and they continued CPR). Within a few moments the ambulance and crew came to the scene and began to give the Serviceman additional help. The Paramedics placed the Serviceman on a backboard and he was loaded into the ambulance.

Comments/ Observations

A good tail board was in place, this was an instance of a well thought plan gone wrong. There was great communication amongst the crews.

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