

OSHA eTOOL

Explains ways to keep electric power workers safe

WASHINGTON -- Approximately 80 workers die from electric shock each year while working on electrical equipment or related utility operations. To help prevent such deaths, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration recently published the "Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution Standard" [eTool](#).

Recent deaths have illustrated the dangers of working with electric power. A worker installing decorative lights on a tree was electrocuted after touching a high-powered overhead electrical line. Another worker was electrocuted after contacting an overhead high-voltage line with a portable light tower while working at a water main repair site.

"We cannot allow these tragedies to continue," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA David Michaels. "This eTool informs employers of their obligation to protect electrical workers from serious injuries and death, and also lets workers know the preventive steps their employers must take to assure worker safety."

This eTool addresses OSHA's [standard](#) and explains preventive measures for protecting workers' safety and health such as providing personal protective equipment, using lockout/tagout procedures to prevent startup of energized equipment and following safety requirements when working on or near power lines.

OSHA's eTools are stand-alone, interactive Web-based training tools on occupational safety and health topics that include modules for answering questions and providing advice on how OSHA regulations apply to users' worksites.

OSHA DEADLINE

Extended for submitting comments on Recordkeeping

WASHINGTON -- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is extending the comment period on the proposed rule to revise the Occupational Injury and Illness Recording and Reporting (Recordkeeping) regulation to March 30, 2010.

OSHA published a proposed [rule](#) to revise its Recordkeeping regulation on January 29, 2010. The proposal would restore a column to the OSHA 300 Log that employers would use to record work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). The proposed rule will not change existing requirements for when and under what circumstances employers must record MSDs on their injury and illness logs.

Four stakeholders requested an extension of the comment period, in part because of the severe February snowstorms that shut down workplaces for more than a week. The 15-day deadline extension ensures that stakeholders have a full 60 days to submit comments on the limited rulemaking.

Comments may be submitted electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, the Federal eRulemaking Portal. If submitting comments by regular or express mail, hand delivery or messenger, send three copies to the OSHA Docket Office, Docket No. OSHA-2009-0044, U.S. Department of Labor, Room N-2625, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20210. Comments not exceeding 10 pages may be faxed to the OSHA Docket Office at 202-693-1648.

For general and technical information, contact Jim Maddux, OSHA Directorate of Standards and Guidance, at 202-693-1950. Press inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Ashley, OSHA Office of Communications, at 202-693-1999.

NEW STUDY REVEALS MORE HAZARDOUS JOBS

When you think of job hazards, you probably picture dangerous machines, high ladders, or even heavy lifting.

But a new study from the UK reveals that a whole new class of jobs can cause an early death.

As it turns out, boring jobs can shave years off workers' lives.

This wasn't a small, short-term study, either.

More than 7,000 civil servants were studied over a 25 year period.

Those who said they were bored were nearly 40% more likely to have died by the end of the study than those who did not.

Puts a whole new spin on the saying "bored to death."

Source: snipurl.com/boreddeath



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MONTHLY TOOLBOX TALK

HAND TOOLS

If you want to do the job, you need tools. If you want to do the job **safely**, you need the right tool for the job and it needs to be well-maintained. Maintaining your tools is as much a part of the job as using them to get the work done.

Hand tools, power tools, pneumatic tools, power-actuated tools, and gasoline powered tools can be found in use on construction projects on any given day. Tools make your job easier and faster. Whether you are a carpenter installing custom cabinets, a mason setting stone or a laborer digging a trench, your hand tools are very important to the success of your job. Just as you would with power tools, make sure you inspect hand tools for chips, cracks and other damage. Remove defective tools from service at once. Using the wrong tool or using the right tool improperly can cause injury to you, and can damage the tool or the part you're working on. It's easier to get the job done with the right tool.

In order to have the necessary tools available when you need them, it is important to maintain and store tools properly. When it comes to hand tool safety, think about these tips:

- Keep tools clean and dry.
- Store hand tools in a designated chest, locker or toolbox where they will be protected.
- Keep tools sharp! Sharp tools cut more easily and help you do the job more safely.
- Never hammer a nail, even a little bit, with any other tool than a hammer.
- Carry tools properly. Never place sharp objects in your pockets.
- Anticipate that the tool could slip; keep your hand and your fingers out of the way.
- Don't use a cheater bar to increase torque on a wrench, or leverage on a pry bar.

The right tool will make you safer, quicker, and more effective. If you don't have the right tool to do the job safely, don't do it. Make the trip back to the truck, your toolbox, or the shop to get the tool that will get the job done safely. That trip will take a lot less time than the trip to the hospital. There is no substitute for the proper tool.

This is especially important for chisels and screwdrivers. Before doing any kind of chiseling, put on safety glasses or goggles and make sure

that the work-piece is securely braced or clamped. Check the condition of the chisel. It should have a sharp, properly ground cutting edge; sharp tools make cutting safer, faster and easier. Check the head of the striking surface. If the head is mushroomed, chipped or badly battered, the chisel should not be used until it is dressed.

Make sure you are using the proper chisel for the job. Cold chisels are used for cutting and chipping metal, and they should never be used on stone or concrete. Brick chisels are designed for scoring and cutting brick; they should never be used on metal. Wood chisels and gouges are for wood. Don't use a hammer or mallet on a push gouge; the impact will damage the handle. Never use a common nail hammer to strike a cold chisel – the hammer or chisel could chip causing eye, hand, or face injuries. Instead, use a ball peen hammer of the proper size or a hand sledge. The face of the hammer should be larger than the head of the chisel.

How about screwdrivers? A screwdriver is just that: a screwdriver. It is not a "screw-chisel" or a "pry-driver". Screwdrivers are designed to drive and extract screws, so use them for those jobs only! Use the right size and type of screwdriver. Do not hold the work-piece in the palm of your hand – the screwdriver may slip and injure you. For many of us, this would not be the first time! Do not use excessive force or pressure on any hand tool. Before you use a screwdriver, check it out. Inspect the blade and shaft for chips, cracks or bends. Check the handle for cracks, missing chunks, splinters or looseness. If the screwdriver is damaged or defective, fix it **before** you use it or get a new one.

Tools help you do your job, but they are potentially dangerous. Accidents associated with tools can cause serious injuries including cuts, punctures, amputations, permanent loss of eyesight, and broken bones. When using any tool, always wear the necessary PPE to protect your eyes, ears, head and lungs. Good lighting is essential. Don't take your eyes off the object you are working on and avoid distractions. Make sure all guards are in place. Never bypass or disable a safety device. When a job produces chips or flying particles, direct them away from your body and away from others. Make sure you have a firm grip and a secure footing when you use large tools. Always cut in a direction away from your body.

Never improvise if you have to compromise safety!