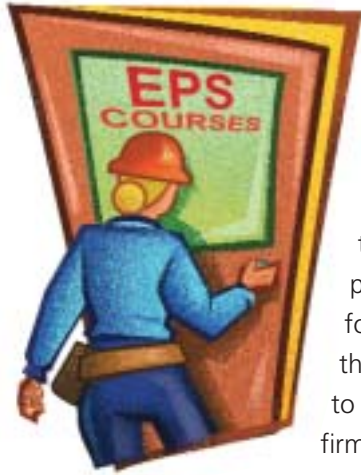


ElectroFactFile



If you are a journeyman electrician or lineman currently serving in a field supervisor capacity,

you know that your job is critical to project success. You also may suspect that there are ways to do it more efficiently and effectively so you can improve your value to your company. NECA, the organization to which your employer belongs, has developed the Electrical Project Supervision (EPS) and Line Construction Foreman (LCF) programs to accomplish these goals. There are also train-the-trainer units for each program to help develop instructors who can deliver the training to their co-workers at the local level. And, now, financial stipends are available to help pay the related expenses of qualified personnel in NECA-member firms who might not otherwise be able to pursue these trend-setting programs. Interested? Ask the boss to get details from his or her NECA chapter office.

Another NECA program that may interest you is set for **October 2-4** in Central Florida. It's **NECA Orlando 2003**, which encompasses not only the association's annual national convention but also The NECA Show, America's leading power distribution & cabling exposition. In addition to experiencing the latest and best products and services for the electrical industry first-hand and hands-on at the huge tradeshow, you can also choose from a variety of in-depth seminars, technical workshops, and other learning adventures. There are even special events to introduce you to additional training available within our organized industry. To get information or to register online, please visit www.NECAShow.org



You have the right to a safe workplace,

and those rights are enforced at the federal level by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. However, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which gave rise to the creation of OSHA and addresses employers' legal obligations for protecting their workers from known job-site hazards, also spells out responsibilities for employees. OSHA requires workers to comply with all safety and health standards that apply to their actions on the job. Among other things, employees should: follow the employer's safety and health

rules and wear or use all required gear and equipment; follow safe work practices for your job, as directed by your employer; and report hazardous conditions to a supervisor or other appropriate person within your company. There's an interesting place on the Internet where you can find out all about your OSHA rights and responsibilities – plus get some free materials to help you learn how to keep yourself safer on the job. It's at www.osha.gov/as/opa/worker

Getting It From Here To There Requires Care

For most electricians and linemen, transporting tools and materials is a routine part of the job – so routine that some of us tend to get sloppy sometimes, “just throw it in the truck and get it to the site.” But there are risks in transporting items carelessly, and not just the obvious ones, such as slipping over loose cords or cables when you’re loading or unloading them, getting hit by a falling object placed haphazardly on an overhead rack, or straining your back from lugging around heavy things.

We’re talking about the danger of damaging tools or materials by not following proper procedures for getting them from one place to another. A common meter damaged during transit can become an instrument of electrocution. Improper transportation of personal protective equipment (PPE) can render it useless.

It makes sense to keep your tools clean, neat, and well organized so that they are ready to use and easy to find. Obviously, not having to waste several minutes rummaging through a cluttered gangbox saves time on the jobsite. It also removes the temptation of grabbing a tool that is inappropriate to the job just because you can’t put your hands on the right one. Here are a few other recommended practices:

- Keep sharp-edged tools in containers such as pouches, holsters, and scabbards.
- Store punches and dies in their storage container, rather than loosely. A cracked pressure-based tool can cause severe injury while under use. It can also leave a hole that is unnecessarily dangerous.
- Never transport a powder-charged tool without first making sure that it is unloaded.
- Put test leads in test-lead cases to prevent damage to lead insulation or boots.
- Put instruments in instrument cases.
- Keep PPE separated from tools and work materials. This helps keep the PPE clean and undamaged.
- Roll up rubber mats and put them in their tubes for transporting them.
- Use shipping containers for motors, breakers, disconnects and similar items to protect them during transit. (For motors, be sure to perform an insulation resistance test and hand-spin the rotor after transportation. Energizing a motor with damaged windings or a bound rotor can be deadly.)
- Secure large items so they don’t roll around and break other items.
- Put small items in containers that will not inadvertently open.
- If transporting a bulk quantity of consumables, secure the container from spillage.
- Never transport loose wire or cable; invariably, it will get tangled
- Inspect electrical gear after transporting it. A visual inspection for signs of impact or breaching of packaging will usually suffice for properly packed items.

Most Important: Always inspect tools and PPE before and after each use and after transporting them. Anything that is noticeably defective should be labeled as such and taken out of service until it is repaired. If it cannot be repaired for safe use, it must be discarded and replaced. If it belongs to the company, label it “Do Not Use” and take it back to the shop or turn it into your supervisor. PPE that has gone through a stressful event, such as a lanyard that has broken a fall, requires a more rigorous inspection before it can be declared safe for reuse.

