

Worker Electrocuted while Replacing Damaged Light Fixture



What happened?

The victim used an elevated structure to gain access to a 110-volt light fixture that needed a burned out bulb replaced. Upon inspection, the victim found that the fixture had internal damage and began working on replacing it. The work surface was wet and covered in a sandy material.

The victim's supervisor went to check on her when she did not appear at the end of her shift. The victim was found face down with her arms off the metal mezzanine and unresponsive; wire cutters were next to her body.

The supervisor saw that the light fixture was not connected so he cut the power to the circuit and secured the hot lead with electrical tape and then checked on the victim. Her clothes were wet on her knee and forearm areas. The rubber cloth gloves she was wearing were also wet to the touch.

Statements taken at the time of inspection state that the neutral line was connected with a wire nut. The hot side was stripped but not connected.

What can you do to prevent this from happening at your workplace?

- Establish and follow a regulatory compliant energy control program (Lockout/Tagout).
- Evaluate the environmental conditions before beginning work. Consider appropriate procedures for working in wet environments.
- Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to the environmental condition.

This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees of a tragic loss of life. The information in this bulletin is based on preliminary data and does NOT represent final determinations of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality

Need more information?

Go to <http://www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety/Basics> for information on safety and health, rules and policies, sample programs, and general assistance. For DOSH contact information, go to <http://www.Lni.wa.gov/Main/ContactInfo/OfficeLocations>.

Interested in a free safety consultation at your workplace?

You may request assistance from DOSH by telephone, letter, or in person. The request may be for a complete review of your company's safety and health status, or for information concerning a specific problem. A consultant will contact you to schedule a time and date for a free onsite consultation. To contact a consultant, go to www.SafetyConsultants.Lni.wa.gov for phone numbers and e-mail addresses in your area.

How does an employee file a complaint?

Employees or employee representatives may file formal complaints with DOSH when they believe a safety or health hazard exists in their workplace. Complaint forms are available from your local L&I office in both English and Spanish, or on the Web at <http://www.Lni.wa.gov/FormPub/Detail.asp?DocID=1784>.

Contact us. We're here to help.