COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

AND AT&T FIELD FORCED (CONSTRUCTION, BSIM, SD&A & OTHERS)

JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

COVERING WORKERS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA & NEVADA

August / September 2015

SMUD REPRESENTATIVES

SHARE THE DANGERS OF POWER WITH OUR CWA / CONSTRUCTION JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

ABOVE: SMUD ELECTRICAL FIELD CONSULTANT LARRY GONZALES LED THE PRESENTATION IN FRONT OF PACKED HOUSE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS FROM ALL OVER NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

SMUD SHARES THE DANGER OF POTENTIAL BACKFEED

"If It's Not Grounded, It's Not Dead!"

By: John Adams Jr. based on information gleaned from SMUD Rep. Larry Gonzales' presentation

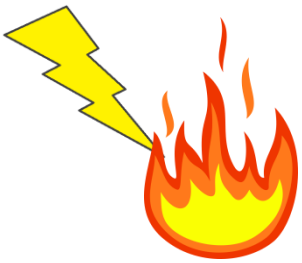
Working around high voltage power can be very dangerous. While SMUD and other electrical companies deal directly with the electrical system daily, our AT&T Field Forces encounter situations in the field daily where the potential for power is ever present. Our cable and equipment in many cases are installed on joint poles where power is present…. or it can be in manholes where high voltage cable is in a shared vault/space with our equipment.

Our technicians in the field are equipped with Foreign Voltage Detectors and other equipment in some cases like 188A's, to test for the presence of power. The usage of this detection equipment has saved many of our techs from putting themselves into a harmful situation, where they were fortunately able to go home at the end of the day because they placed safety first and used the prescribed equipment.

If a power utility worker from SMUD or another company tells you that a downed or broken line is dead or de-energized, please know that at any point that line could become energized due to backfeed! In order to remove the potential danger of backfeed, the electrical worker must install yellow grounding jumpers and cables that place a direct path to ground. It is ALWAYS OK to ask the SMUD or other electrical worker to prove the line dead by installing the grounding equipment. If you do not visibly see the big yellow grounding jumpers and cables around your work area, ask them where it is. Failure to ensure that the line has been proven dead can put you and others you are working with in a potentially fatal situation.

While telephone low voltage cables operate on Direct Current (DC), the electrical lines operate with Alternating Current (AC). Backfeed can occur in the system for many various reasons…. It can be that a commercial customer fired up a generator without disconnecting their location from the main line…. It can come from solar or wind turbans introducing electricity back into the network. There are many instances that can cause backfeed…. But what is important to remember is that absent the presence of the yellow grounding jumpers and cable to prove the line dead, the potential for backfeed is ever present and because of that, the work situation is unsafe. If you have questions or encounter problems please contact your manager, your shop steward, or a member of the safety committee. In the Sacramento Area f you should need urgent assistance from SMUD, please call Larry Gonzales at (916) 869-0706.

To report a SMUD outage, 1-888-456-7683.



NEAR MISS

SMUD FIRE DAMAGE AT 9230 KIEFER BLVD

Shared By: Frank Henderson and Bob Pifer

On Wednesday July 29, 2015, SMUD was re-energizing a new site on an existing joint pole feeding an apartment complex. When they flipped the switch to energize the new line, it blew a fuse and caused a fire at 9230 Kiefer Blvd. After the fire was out, SMUD's crew responds and makes their repairs and clears the pole for AT&T to make the necessary repairs to the multiple riser cables and splice cases on the joint pole.

The next day on Thursday July 30, 2014, our construction splicing technician upon arrival was going to verify how much damage was done to our cable(s) and how much needed to be replaced. Before our tech started his work, he tested for voltage, even though SMUD had cleared the pole, and released it to us. The tech tested all the ground locations and the pole and there was no voltage. He then placed his ladder on the strand and began climbing, tested the strand and began working. While our technician was working he felt a little shock so he tested the strand again and there was voltage but not enough to make his FVD make an audible tone and be considered hazardous (less than 50v's). He then hooked his W1BU cord to ground and the cap of his FVD and ascended back up the ladder to test again. Voltage was still detected so with his rubber gloves on he connected his Temporary bond cord to ground and then the strand and tried to bleed off the induction. The strand was still energized, so the tech stopped working, called his supervisor and called SMUD who was quick to respond.

SMUD found that they had a faulty insulator and that the soot from the fire damage was the cause of the voltage detected. A few hours later SMUD cleared the pole and we continued making necessary repairs safely.

Never take anything for granted. Always assume everything is energized until you prove otherwise with your 188A or FVD. This is the second episode within the last 6 months, where a power utility company turned the job site over to us saying that the area was safe, and our technicians, following their training protocol, proved otherwise.

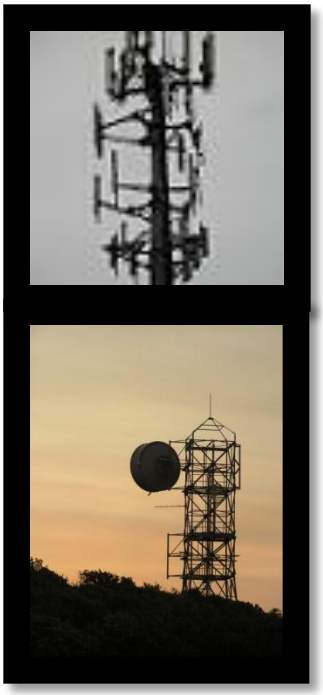
PREVENTING TICK BITES WHILE WORKING IN WOODED AREAS, LOW GROWING GRASSLAND, SEASHORES AND YARDS
Taken in part by a truly remarkable slideshow assembled by CWA member and tech working in the Auburn FOC

Always walk in the center of trails, in order to avoid ticks. Use a repellent with DEET (on skin or clothing) or permethrin (on clothing) and wear long sleeves, long pants and socks. (ATT 100010075: REPELLENT INSECT 6 OZ CAN). Wear light-colored clothing, which makes the ticks more visible on clothing. Tuck pant legs into your socks so that ticks cannot crawl up inside of the pant legs. Some ticks can crawl down into shoes and are small enough to crawl through most socks.
Conduct a body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas by searching the entire body for ticks. Use a hand –held or full-length mirror to view all parts of the body and remove any tick you find. Typical hiding areas include under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, back of the knees, in and around hair and around the waist.

RADIO FREQUENCY (RF) SAFETY AWARENESS

Taken from AT&T September Safety Coverage – EH&S

Radio frequency (RF) energy is one of several forms of non-ionizing electromagnetic (EM) radiation. RF energy is generally defined as a group or band of frequencies ranging from about 3 kilohertz (kHz) to 300 gigahertz (GHz). Wireless technologies, such as cellular telephone, personal communication services (PCS), paging, satellite communication, and microwave radio relay services, use RF energy to transmit and receive low-power radio communications signals.



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the principal agency responsible for administering RF safety requirements to wireless communication services. All transmitting facilities, operations or devices must comply with the FCC's Maximum Permissible Exposure (MPE) limits for preventing harmful effects from exposure to RF energy.

RF exposure hazards are normally non-existent in publicly accessible areas, however, potential hazards may exist for employees who access or work in an RF antenna environment such as building rooftops, communication facilities or tower sites. Therefore, employees must be aware of their potential for exposure and exercise control of their exposure to RF energy. Additional information on RF safety and general guidelines for working in RF antenna environments are outlined in EHS-4500-JBA-1 'RF Energy Job Aid' or visit the EH&S Radiation Safety topic page.

EH&S recently announced the availability of a new interactive RF Safety Awareness course on the Learning Solutions (LSO) and AT&T mLearning systems. This course is listed on the applicable EH&S Training Matrices and replaces all existing RF safety courses.

SAFETY FLASH

Incidents selected by John Adams Jr./ provided for this issue by Bob Pifer & C.P. Kline

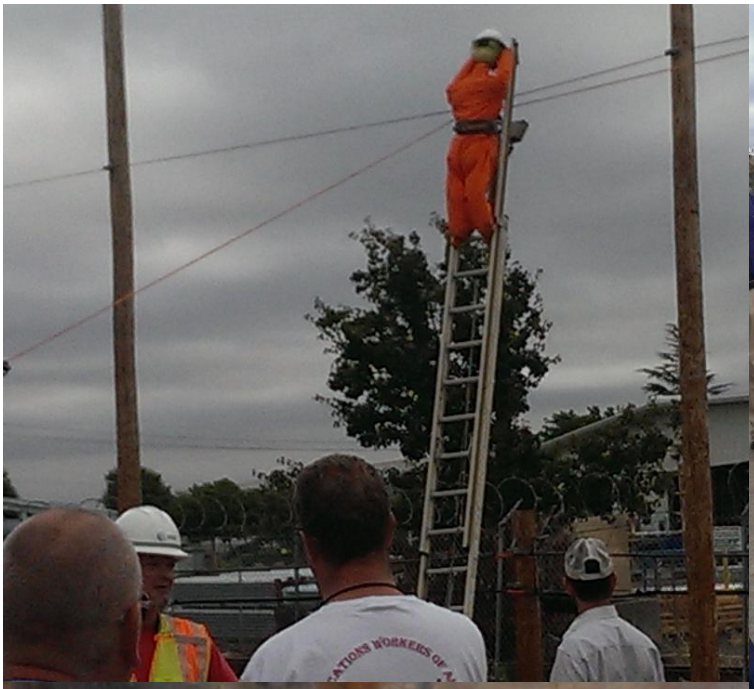
1. **DELAYED REACTION IS ALARMING:** A Manager OSP Engineering Design in Oakland, California states that no accident occurred. The manager parked the company vehicle and was at a complete stop for at least 1-2 minutes looking at a clip board to review site visit notes. Suddenly, the alarm of the car next to him went off. The owner of the car with the alarm came out and claims the company vehicle struck the non-company vehicle.
2. **SERIOUS ILLNESS - 911 EMERGENCY NECESSARY:** A Manager in Pleasanton who suffers from chronic migraines, had one while at working at his desk so severe that he lost the ability to speak. An ambulance was called and took the manager to the ER to be treated for the pain. It turned out that the manager was diagnosed with Meningitis.
3. **ANOTHER INCIDENT - 911 EMERGENCY NECESSARY:** A Splicing Tech in Leona Valley, Colorado was sitting at a pedestal working. The tech then stood up and fainted. The tech fell on left shoulder and back of head. The tech was transported to hospital by ambulance.
4. **STUCK DROP LEADS TO HAND INJURY:** A Premises Technician working in Woodland was taking a drop off at the NID binding post and it would not come out. Finally the stuck drop gave way and tech hit their hand on corner of the NID. Accident Investigation to follow.
5. **HIT & RUN… WITH A RETURN:** A Splicing Technician driving in Fair Oaks at Sunrise Blvd at Winding Way was waiting in the company vehicle to turn left. Unfortunately the company vehicle was struck by a non-company vehicle which had run the light while traveling Southbound on Sunrise Blvd. Damage to the company vehicle left rear quarter panel. The driver of the non-company vehicle left the scene. Later the non-company vehicle involved returned. Fortunately there were no injuries to either party reported.
6. **BE MINDFUL OF SAFETY AT ALL TIMES IN AND AROUND THE MANHOLE:** A Splicing Tech in Salinas was placing 1200 stub in a manhole. The injury occurred around noon, where the technician had another employee feeding the cable into the manhole while they were racking to place 1200 cable stub. Technician used their arm instead of using legs or the right tools to assist in placing cable. While pulling and pushing the stub the technician felt they pulled a muscle in the right arm. The tech waited about a month before reporting the injury, as the pain was preventing him from sleeping.
7. **ANOTHER OCCUPATIONAL INCIDENT INVOLVING A MANHOLE:** A Splicing Tech in San Francisco was working a fiber job. As the tech was attempting to close the manhole lid, the person felt a pain on their lower back. Tech went on disability for a strained back.

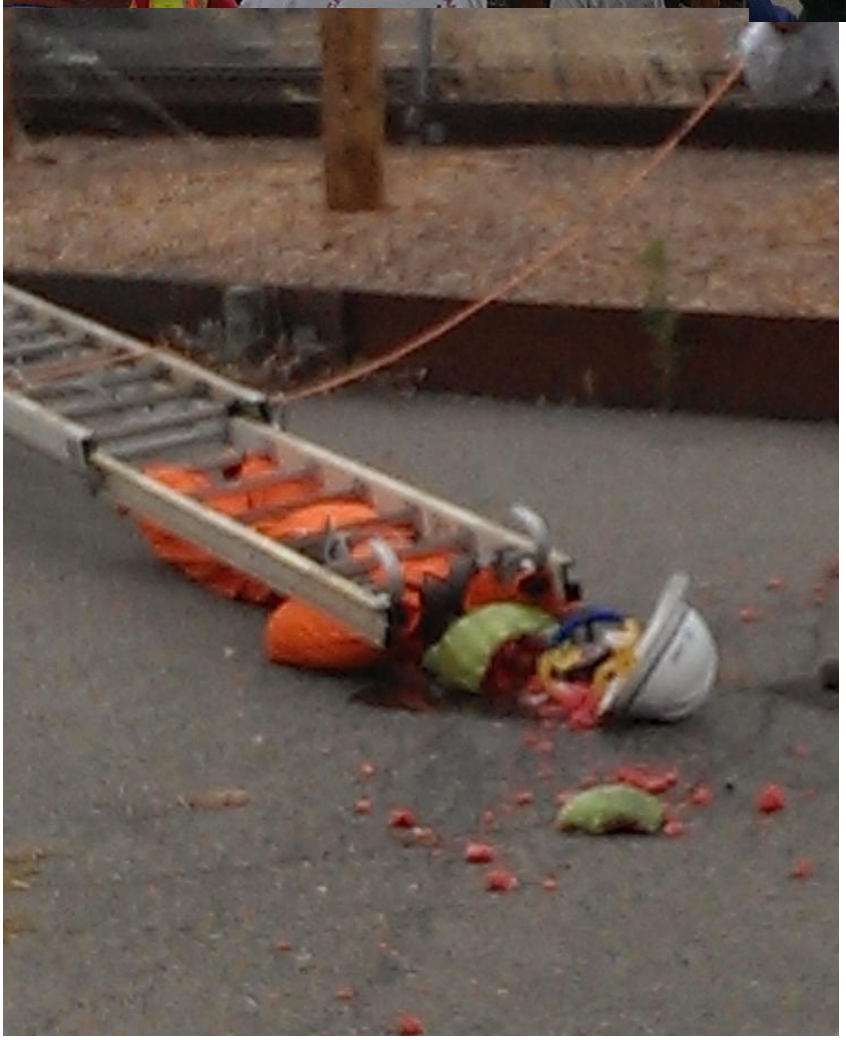
NOTICE OF E-MAIL ADDRESS CHANGE

If you would like to submit something for the next Safety Newsletter – please e-mail it to me John@cwa9421.org

WORKING IN THE BITE DEMONSTRATION

BY COMMITTEE MEMBER & PRESIDENT 9431 MIKE DAVIS





Mike Davis – is a DEG Technician in Grass Valley, an instrumental member of our Joint Safety Committee, a member of the CWA/AT&T JCOSH Committee *(Joint Committee On Safety & Health) and President of CWA Local 9431. He is an avid climber, first responder and all around good guy who cares about the safety of all members.

To further illustrate the danger our techs can often unknowingly putting themselves into, Mike has performed all over Northern California these very realistic and graphic demonstrations with the help of his watermelon headed ladder dummy. There is never a safe time to work in the bite.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words…. I couldn't agree more. Mellonhead didn't survive the fall associated with working in the bite… please don't put yourself in a situation that could result as seen a very possible fatality.

Thanks Mike for all you do for our committee and our members. **– John Adams Jr.**