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**SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURE**

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# **Electrical Related Safe Work Practices**

**SPP#1910.333**

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## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this safety policy and procedure is to establish guidelines and procedures for North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) employees who may be exposed to electrical related hazards.

## 2.0 Scope and Applicability

Electrical accidents are generally caused by unsafe conditions, unsafe acts, or combinations of the two. Some unsafe electric equipment and installations can be identified by the presence of faulty insulation, improper grounding, loose connections, defective parts, ground faults in equipment, or unguarded live parts.

Environments containing flammable vapors, liquids, or gases, areas containing corrosive atmospheres, and wet and damp locations are some unsafe environments affecting electrical safety. Some unsafe acts such as the failure to de-energize electrical equipment when it is being repaired or inspected, the intentional use of defective and unsafe tools, or the use of tools or equipment too close to energized parts are all contributors to electrical hazards.

This safety policy and procedure provides guidelines for safely working around electrical hazards. It includes provisions for training, lockout/tagout requirements, and discussions of why safety related work practices are required. Guidelines are also presented for specific types of work practices and the required precautionary practices when using portable electric equipment and while being in hazardous locations. Additionally, it presents examples of signs, labels and marking requirements.

This document details the areas of responsibility for managers/unit heads, supervisors, employees, and Safety and Risk Management within NCDOT.

This safety policy and procedure affects the following job classifications within NCDOT:

- Bridge Maintenance Technicians
- Traffic Control Technicians
- Bridge Maintenance Electricians
- Any other NCDOT Electricians

The following job classifications may be affected by this safety policy and procedure if they are exposed to parts of electrical circuits operating at 50 volts or more:

- Electrical and Electronic Engineers
- Electric and Electronic Technicians
- Machine Operators
- Maintenance Mechanics and Technicians

Additionally, any other employee who as a result of their job duties is exposed to electrical related hazards is also affected by this safety policy and procedure.

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## 3.0 Reference

This safety policy and procedure dealing with Electrical Related Safe Work Practices is established in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry (29 CFR 1910.331-335) and Occupational Safety and Health Standards for Construction Industry (29 CFR 1926.416- 417).

## 4.0 Policy

It is the policy of NCDOT to provide a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that cause or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees or the public.

Therefore, as a minimum, these requirements will be followed in NCDOT:

- Power equipment will be plugged into wall receptacles with power switches in the off position.
- Electrical equipment will be unplugged by grasping the plug and pulling. Cords should never be pulled or jerked to unplug the equipment due to excessive strain exerted on cord insulation which may pull away from the plug resulting in exposed wiring.
- Frayed, cracked, or exposed wiring on equipment cords must be taken out of service and replaced.
- “Cheater plug” (three prong/two prong adapter used for non-grounded receptacles), extension cords with junction box receptacle ends, or other makeshift plug/receptacle devices will not be used.
- Temporary or permanent storage of materials must not be allowed within three feet of any electrical panel or electrical equipment.
- Any electrical equipment causing shocks must be taken out of service and tagged with a “DANGER- DO NOT USE” tag or equivalent.

When electrical hazards exist that cannot be eliminated, then engineering practices, administrative practices, safe work practices, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and proper training regarding Electrical Related Safe Work Practices will be implemented. These measures will be implemented to minimize those hazards to ensure the safety of employees and the public.

## 5.0 General Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each manager/unit head, supervisor, and employee to ensure implementation of NCDOT’s safety policy and procedure on Electrical Related Safe Work Practices. It is also the responsibility of each NCDOT employee to immediately report any unsafe act or condition to their supervisor. Specific responsibilities are found in Section 6.3.

## 6.0 Procedure

This section provides definitions, establishes general provisions, and identifies specific responsibilities as required by NCDOT's safety policy and procedure on Electrical Related Safe Work Practices.

### 6.1 Definitions

#### **Classified Location**

Locations which are classified depending on the properties of the flammable vapors, liquids or gases, or combustible dusts or fibers which may be present and the likelihood that a flammable or combustible concentration or quantity is present

#### **Electrical Hazards**

Any risk of electrical shock that is not reduced to a safe level by the electrical installation.

#### **Exposed**

Part of any electrical circuit that is capable of being inadvertently touched or having an unsafe approach distance for an individual.

#### **Hazardous Classified Location**

Locations which are classified hazardous depending on the properties of the flammable vapors, liquids or gases, or combustible dusts or fibers which may be present and the potential that a flammable or combustible concentration or quantity is present.

#### **Ground**

A conducting connection between an electrical circuit or equipment and the earth, or to some conducting body that serves in place of the earth.

#### **Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupter (GFCI)**

A device whose function is to interrupt the electric circuit to the load when a fault current to ground exceeds some predetermined value that is less than that required to operate the overcurrent protective device (fuse or circuit breaker) of the supply circuit.

#### **Qualified Person**

Those persons who are permitted to work on or near exposed energized parts and are trained in electrical safe work practices.

#### **Safety Related Work Practices**

Skills and techniques used to safely perform work activities near or on electrical equipment.

#### **Wet Location**

Indoor or outdoor locations subject to intrusion or saturation with water or other liquids where electrical equipment or wiring may be present, such as vehicle washing areas, vehicle service areas, and locations unprotected and exposed to weather.

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## 6.2 General Provisions

This section details the provisions of this safety policy and procedure with each provision discussed in a separate subsection. The provisions adopted by NCDOT are:

- Training
- Lockout/Tagout Requirements
- Safety Related Work Practices
- Portable Electric Equipment
- Hazardous Locations
- Protective Equipment
- Labels, Signs, and Markings

### 6.2.1 Training

It is the responsibility of each exposed employee's immediate supervisor to ensure that the employee has received the training necessary to safely perform his or her duties. This training will be given via classroom and on-the-job instruction and is to be documented.

Exposed employees shall be trained in and familiar with the safety related work practices required by 29 CFR Part 1910 section 331 through 335, and safety related work practices contained within the National Electric Code as they pertain to their respective job assignments. Additional training requirements for Qualified Persons are also mandated.

Employees will be trained in specific hazards associated with their potential exposure. This training will include isolation of energy, hazard identification, premises wiring, connection to supply, generation, transmission, distribution installations, clearance distances, and emergency procedures.

Qualified Persons shall, at a minimum, be trained in and familiar with:

- The skills and techniques necessary to distinguish exposed live parts from other parts of electric equipment.
- The skills and techniques necessary to determine the nominal voltage of exposed live parts.
- The approach distances specified in Appendix A and the corresponding voltage to which NCDOT qualified persons may be exposed.
- Arc Flash Hazard Awareness and requirements for PPE for live electrical work.

### 6.2.2 Lockout/Tagout Procedure

All electrical energy sources must be locked out or tagged out or both when any employee is exposed to direct or indirect contact with parts of fixed electrical equipment or circuits. Refer to [SPP# 1910.147, Control of Hazardous Energy \(Lockout/Tagout\)](#), for additional detail.

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### 6.2.3 Safety Related Work Practices

Safety related work practices will be used to prevent electric shock or other injuries resulting from either direct or indirect electrical contacts. Safety related work practices will be consistent with the nature and extent of the associated electrical hazards.

Specific types of work practices covered by this safety policy and procedure include:

- Working with De-energized Parts
- Working with Energized Parts
- Vehicular and Mechanical Equipment near Overhead Lines and Underground Lines
- Illumination
- Conductive Materials and Equipment
- Portable Ladders
- Housekeeping

Appendix B details these specific work practices. Appendix C provides an electrical safety checklist to assess electrical hazards in your workplace.

### 6.2.4 Portable Electric Equipment

All portable electric equipment will be handled in such a manner that will not damage or reduce service life. Flexible cords connected to equipment may not be used for raising or lowering equipment and will not be used if damage to the outer insulation is present. Additionally, visual inspections are required and unauthorized alterations of the grounding protection are not allowed to ensure the safety of employees.

Prior to each shift, a visual inspection will be performed for external defects and for possible internal damage.

Attachment plugs and receptacles may not be connected or altered which would prevent proper continuity of the equipment grounding conductor. In addition, these devices may not be altered to allow the grounding pole of a plug to be inserted into slots intended for connection to the current-carrying conductors.

### 6.2.5 Hazardous Locations

Portable electric equipment and flexible cords used in highly conductive work locations or in job locations where employees are likely to contact water or conductive liquids shall be approved by the manufacturer for those locations. The hazardous locations that employees should be aware of include, wet locations and locations where combustible or flammable atmospheres are present.

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**For wet locations**, employees' hands will not be wet when plugging and unplugging energized equipment. Energized plug and receptacle connections will be handled only with protective equipment if the condition could provide a conductive path to the employee's hand (if, for example, a cord connector is wet from being immersed in water). In addition, ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection is required for some equipment/locations and is also recommended for use in all wet or highly conductive locations.

**For combustible/flammable atmospheres**, all electric equipment and wiring systems in classified locations must meet The National Electric Code requirements for that particular classification. See Appendix D for definitions of Classified Locations.

### 6.2.6 Protective Equipment

Employees working in areas where there are potential electrical hazards will be provided with and use protective equipment that is appropriate for the work to be performed. *(Traffic Control Technicians who service traffic signal cabinets at ground level will not be required to wear electrical safety boots or rubber insulating gloves. This is because of the low source voltages of the traffic signal cabinets and the concrete pad on which the cabinet resides. However, safe electrical work practices shall still be followed.)*

Examples of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which might be needed for protection against electric shock include but are not limited to:

- Nonconductive hard-hats, gloves, and foot protection or insulating mats
- Eye and face protection whenever there is danger from electric arcs or flashes
- Insulated tools or handling equipment
- Protective shields and barriers to protect against electrical shock and burns

Additionally, other ways of protecting employees from the hazards of electrical shock will be implemented, including insulation and guarding of live parts. Insulation provides an electrical barrier to the flow of current. The insulation must be appropriate for the voltage and the insulating material must be undamaged, clean, and dry. Guarding prevents the employee from coming too close to energized parts. It can be in the form of a physical barricade or it can be provided by installing the live parts out of reach from the working surface. For additional detail, refer to [SPP# 1910.137, Electrical Protective](#)

### 6.2.7 Signs, Labels and Markings

Safety signs, safety labels, barricades or other means (see Figure 1) will be used where necessary to warn and protect employees from contact with electrical hazards.



Figure 1

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Electrical equipment shall be marked with the manufacturer's name, trademark, or other descriptive marking is placed on the equipment. Other markings shall be provided giving voltage, current, or wattage. The marking shall be of sufficient durability to withstand the environment involved.

Every circuit in electric circuit breaker panel shall be labeled with specific purpose.

## **6.3 Specific Responsibilities**

### **6.3.1 Managers/Unit Heads**

Managers/Unit Heads are responsible for ensuring that adequate funding is available to provide proper equipment, supplies, and training for exposed employees. They will also be responsible for identifying the employees affected by this safety policy and procedure.

Managers/Unit Heads will obtain and coordinate the required training for the affected employees. Managers/Unit Heads will also ensure compliance with this safety policy and procedure through their auditing process.

### **6.3.2 Supervisors**

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that only qualified employees are assigned or permitted to perform work directly on energized parts of equipment. Supervisors are also responsible for ensuring that employees in their charge will comply with the requirements and responsibilities of this safety policy and procedure.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring areas around electrical equipment, such as circuit breaker panels, disconnects, and fixed power tools, are kept free from stored items, debris, and any liquids or material that would create slippery floors or obstruct access to the equipment for maintenance or emergencies.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that a list of all energized equipment including isolation points and procedures for safe operation are developed for review by employees or regulating agencies.

### **6.3.3 Employees**

Each employee will comply with this safety policy and procedure. It is the responsibility of each employee to identify potential hazards when required to work with or near sources of electrical energy.

Employees will not perform work involving exposure to potentially hazardous levels of electrical energy without instruction/training specific to the hazards of the tasks.

Employees shall practice good housekeeping and observe activities that could cause electrical shock hazards.

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Good housekeeping will include but is not limited to:

- Not having water on floors near electrical equipment
- Not storing tools or other materials around electrical panels or equipment disconnects
- Not cleaning tools and electrical equipment with solvents

Employees will report suspected hazards to their supervisors immediately. Employees are also responsible for performing daily visual inspections of all portable electric equipment to be used during that work shift.

### **6.3.4 Safety and Risk Management**

Safety and Risk Management will provide prompt assistance to managers/unit heads, supervisors, or others as applicable on any matter concerning this safety policy and procedure. Safety and Risk Management will assist in developing or securing required training.

Additionally, Safety Engineers will provide consultative and audit assistance to ensure effective implementation of this safety policy and procedure.

**APPENDIX A: Approach Distances for NCDOT Qualified Employees - AC**

<u>Voltage Range (phase to phase)</u>	<u>Minimum Approach Distance</u>
300V and less	Avoid Contact
Over 300V, but less than 750V	1 ft. 0 in. (30.5 cm)
Over 750V, but less than 2kV	1 ft. 6 in. (46 cm)
Over 2kV	Not allowed for NCDOT

### APPENDIX B: Specific Types of Work Practices

#### Conductive Materials and Equipment

Conductive materials and equipment (e.g., hand tools) will be handled to prevent contact with exposed energized conductors or circuit parts.

Conductive articles of jewelry and clothing (such as watch bands, bracelets, rings, key chains, necklaces, metalized aprons, cloth with conductive thread, or metal headgear) will not be worn.

#### De-energized Parts

All electrical parts exceeding 50 volts will be de-energized before an employee works on or near equipment unless:

- The de-energizing creates a more hazardous situation
- The equipment, by design, cannot be shut down

When any employee is exposed to direct or indirect contact with parts of fixed electrical equipment or circuits which have been de-energized, the electrical energy source will be locked out or tagged out or both.

Supervisors should refer to [SPP# 1910.147 Control of Hazardous Energy \(Lockout/Tagout\)](#), for guidance on these procedures.

#### Energized Parts

If work must be performed while equipment is energized, additional safety measures will be taken to ensure the safety of the employee.

Protection from energized parts will be suitable for the type of hazard involved. Supervisors should refer to [SPP# 1910.137, Electrical Protective Devices](#), for additional detail.

Only Qualified Persons will be allowed to perform work directly on energized parts or equipment. Qualified Persons will be capable of working safely on energized circuits and will be familiar with special precautionary techniques, Personal Protective Equipment, insulating and shielding materials and insulated tools. Qualified Persons must also have received the training required in section 6.2.1 of this safety policy and procedure.

## APPENDIX B: Specific Types of Work Practices (Continued) 2

### **Illumination**

Employees will be provided with adequate light to work on energized equipment or equipment will be relocated to ensure adequate light is available. See [SPP# 1926.56, Illumination](#), for additional details.

### **Portable Ladders**

Portable ladders will have nonconductive surfaces if they are used where the employee or the ladder could be exposed to electrical shock hazards. See [SPP# 1910.25, Ladders](#), for related information.

### **Reclosing Circuits**

If circuits are tripped using a protective device such as ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), power will not be restored until the reason for the interruption is determined and corrected. Fuses or breakers will not be replaced or reset until it is determined that the circuit is safe to operate.

Fuses will not be replaced with higher rated fuses or with makeshift devices to bypass circuit protection as designed. Problems will be identified and promptly repaired by a qualified person.

### **Vehicular and Mechanical Equipment Near Overhead Power Lines**

Overhead power lines will be de-energized and grounded before any work is performed by any vehicle or mechanical equipment near the energized overhead power lines. If the overhead lines cannot be de-energized, then the vehicle or mechanical equipment will be operated so that a clearance of 10 feet is maintained.

If the voltage of the overhead line exceeds 50 kV, the distance will be increased 4 inches for every 10 kV increase in power. If lines are protected with properly rated insulating devices, the distance may be decreased.

If the equipment is an aerial lift insulated for the voltage involved and if the work is performed by a Qualified Person, the clearance may be reduced to a distance given in Appendix A. See [SPP# 1910.67, Aerial Truck Operations](#), and [SPP # 1910.179, Cranes](#), for related information.

If protective measures such as guarding or isolation are provided, these measures must protect the employee from contacting such lines directly with any part of the body or indirectly through conductive materials, tools, or equipment.

Employees on the ground or in the vicinity of overhead lines will be instructed to remain clear of the equipment or any other source of energized equipment unless using properly rated Personal Protective Equipment.



# Electrical Safety Checklist

Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Checked By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT/ MACHINERY

All electrical equipment and machinery must be grounded effectively so that there is no potential difference between the metal enclosures. Use the voltage detector or other test equipment to find discrepancies to determine the corrective action required.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All machine and equipment disconnects are properly and easily identifiable which the specific items they shut off.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Power cords to and from equipment, machines, and tools do not hang on pipes, nails, hooks, or other sharp edges.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All machinery and equipment have been properly tested for adequate grounding.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Power cords to and from equipment, machines, and tools have plugs with ground in good condition, and cords free from frays, damaged insulation, and/or manual electrical tape fixes. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disconnects are near their machines or equipment and easily accessible in an emergency.   | <input type="checkbox"/> All electrical and service panels on equipment and machinery are free from damage and accessible for maintenance.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disconnects have all been tested for operability and checked for damage.  | <input type="checkbox"/> All switches and breakers are labeled correctly for their respective machines.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insulation on all cord and cable electrical connections to equipment, machinery, tools, etc. have strain relief and are free of damage. | <input type="checkbox"/> All non-working and broken equipment, machinery, and tools are properly locked out, tagged, and/or removed from service.   |

## GROUND- FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS ( GFCI)

Where there is an employee exposure to potential line to ground shock hazards, GFCI protection should be provided. Use your GFCI tester to be sure the GFCI is operable.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GFCI's are in use in wet/damp places where portable electrical equipment is in use, and also in places that are frequented by the public. | <input type="checkbox"/> All GFCI's have been tested at least monthly to confirm working condition. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All electrical outlets with GFCI protection are labeled as such.  |   |

## LIGHTING/ RECEPTACLES

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cord and plug connected lighting have been tested for proper grounding.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> All electrical lighting with damaged/frayed cords and plugs have been replaced or removed  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All receptacles have been tested for proper wiring configuration using a receptacle tester. | <input type="checkbox"/> All receptacle covers are in place and free from damage.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All cord strain relief have been checked for secure connections                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Surface mounted receptacle boxes are properly protected from damage from mobile equipment. |

## APPENDIX C: Electrical Safety Checklist

### ALL OTHER ELECTRICAL & MISCELANEOUS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All drop cords and surge protectors are grounded and the plug is in good condition.  | <input type="checkbox"/> There are no surge protectors connected end to end in a "daisy chain" manner.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All drop cords and surge protectors are free from burn marks, frays, or other noticeable damage.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> There are no flexible cords or drop cords being used in place of fixed wiring   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All circuit panels and service entrance panels have 3 feet of clearance in the front that is free of any items and/or storage. | <input type="checkbox"/> Conductors are free of abrasion at point of entry on all knockout boxes and electrical cabinets.                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All unused holes on knockout boxes are sealed with knockout plugs.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical rooms are restricted access only and labeled as such.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All electrical equipment is located and/or stored in dry temperate conditions.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lockout/tagout hardware is available to employees for isolating machines, equipment, and tools from their energy sources.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> There are no broken or damaged conduit running to or from any electrical units.  | <input type="checkbox"/> All metal pipes are electrically grounded, and the grounding electrode to the cold-water pipe has been checked for grounding. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All circuits in the breaker cabinet are labeled legibly and correctly.   | <input type="checkbox"/> High voltage signs are hung where applicable.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical rooms have clean floors and are free from flammable items.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Extensions cords are in good condition.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical rooms are adequately ventilated to account for heat load.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Extensions cords do not run through doors or wall openings.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency lighting is present and in proper working condition  |  |

## APPENDIX D: Classified Locations

### Class I Locations

Those locations in which flammable gases or vapors are or may be present in the air in quantities sufficient to produce explosive or ignitable mixtures. Class I locations include the following:

#### *Class I, Division 1*

Those locations in which hazardous concentrations of flammable gases or vapors may exist under normal operating conditions; or in which hazardous concentrations of such gases and vapors may exist frequently because of repair or maintenance operations or because of leakage; or in which breakdown or faulty operation of equipment or processes might release hazardous concentrations of flammable gases or vapors, and might also cause simultaneous failure of electric equipment.

#### *Class I, Division 2*

Those locations in which volatile flammable liquids or flammable gases are handled, processed, or used, but in which the hazardous liquids, vapors, or gases will normally be confined within closed containers or closed systems from which they can escape only in case of accidental rupture or breakdown of such containers or systems, or in case of abnormal operation of equipment.

### Class II Locations

Those locations that are hazardous because of the presence of combustible dusts. Class II locations include the following:

#### *Class II, Division 1*

Those locations in which combustible dust is or may be in suspension in the air under normal operating conditions in quantities sufficient to produce explosive or ignitable mixtures; or where mechanical failure or abnormal operation of machinery or equipment might cause such explosive or ignitable mixtures to be produced, and might also provide a source of ignition through simultaneous failure of electric equipment, operation of protection devices, or from other causes; or in which combustible dusts of an electrically conductive nature may be present.

#### *Class II, Division 2*

Those locations in which combustible dust will not normally be in suspension in the air in quantities sufficient to produce explosive or ignitable mixtures, and dust accumulations are normally insufficient to interfere with the normal operation of electrical equipment or other apparatus.

### Class III Locations

Those locations that are hazardous because of the presence of easily ignitable fibers or flyings but in which such fibers or flyings are not likely to be in suspension in the air in quantities sufficient to produce ignitable mixtures. Class III locations include the following:

#### *Class III, Division 1*

Those locations in which easily ignitable fibers or materials producing combustible flyings are handled, manufactured, or used.

#### *Class III, Division 2*

Those locations in which easily ignitable fibers are stored or handled, except in process of manufacture.