



# Safety Alliance Updates

In Conjunction with the OSHA Alliance



## Important Dates:

**August 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>**  
5<sup>th</sup> District Progress Meeting

**October 18<sup>th</sup>**  
OSHA Alliance Meeting

## OSHA Alliance News

“This Alliance is confirmation that leaders in our industry have recognized safety issues in the outside electrical trade and are striving to create a safer workforce.” Steve Gaines, Chapter Manager, Southeastern Line Chapter, NECA

From Oct. 1, 1999 to Sept. 30, 2002, OSHA investigated 137 fatal accidents in Georgia, Alabama, Florida and Mississippi that resulted from contact with live electrical sources. Of these accidents, 65 involved contact with energized power transmission lines and associated equipment.

In 2003, a group of employers, IBEW officials, OSHA Representatives, SELCAT and Southeastern Line Chapter representatives met in Atlanta to address safety concerns associated with the Outside Line Industry. What evolved from that meeting was a program (OSHA Alliance) that would establish outreach methods and provide participants with avenues to exchange information that will address engrained practices amongst the industry’s workforce. This newsletter is one of those methods. We seek your help, input, and most of all your voice to en-

sure the practices being implemented will best serve you and the safety of your fellow worker.

*Please relay any input or suggestions to the Chapter Office, in order that we would be able to provide employees with the best practices and information to ensure a safer jobsite.*

## A Word From The OSHA Region IV Office

Cindy Coe Laseter, OSHA’s regional administrator in Atlanta issued the following comments.

“The Alliance between IBEW, NECA, SELCAT and OSHA is designed to provide an exchange of information among the participants. The web site established as a part of the Alliance provides a wonderful method of communicating ideas and best practices used by member companies in the Alliance, and the “near miss” reports are an excellent way to correct similar conditions on other job sites before

an accident occurs.

The Alliance provides for training and education for all employees of the member companies and allows for more communication between OSHA and the organizations represented. This also allows employees an avenue to bring their opinions and concerns

about OSHA’s involvement with the industry to OSHA’s attention. I believe that the tools available to all of us through this Alliance, can help in reducing injuries and fatalities to linemen and heighten our awareness of the critical work performed by this industry.”

*“This industry has operated for years without the benefit of collective sharing of total information. By having the Alliance, a very large workforce will be exposed to New Practices, Training Aids, and Corrective Actions.”*

*-Bill Green,  
The MYR Group*



## *The OSHA Alliance Agenda*

The participants in the OSHA Alliance will be working together to improve upon three critical areas in which they hope to achieve safer workplaces as well as reduce and prevent exposure to electrical transmission and distribution equipment hazards. These three elements are: Training and Education, Outreach and Communication, and National Promotion.

## *Training and Education*

The first goal is to increase training and education for the safety of employees. There are three components to improve upon in this category. The first goal is to develop training and education programs for employees that focuses on safety and health issues related to the electrical utility industry. These safety and health programs will be put together under the broad categories of Hazard Recognition, Management Systems, and Health Hazards.

The second training objective is to develop safety and health



curricula focusing on the primary causes of fatal accidents in the electrical utility industry. Subjects such as improper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), failure to maintain a safe distance, and failure to utilize proper equipotential grounding techniques will be included in these curricula. The final goal will be to deliver the training to experienced, as well as inexperienced apprentices, by the IBEW, SELCAT, and the Southeastern Line Constructors Chapter, NECA.

## *Outreach and Communication*

Another goal of the participants in the OSHA Alliance is to increase outreach and communication by the leaders in the electrical utility industry. The first objective on this agenda is to share information among OSHA personnel and industry safety and health professionals regarding best practices or effective approaches towards implementing those practices. Participants in the Alliance will also publicize results through outreach by IBEW, SELCAT, and Southeastern Line Constructors Chapter Membership Meetings, local labor meetings training sessions and other events. One way that the Southeastern Line Constructors Chapter is participating is by issuing this quarterly newsletter which includes information about the Alliance, Near Miss Reports, and safety updates within the electrical utility industry.

The second aim of the communication and out-

reach plan is to work with OSHA to provide expertise in developing information on the recognition and prevention of workplace hazards. Participants will also provide expertise in developing ways of communication such information (e.g. print and electronic media) to employers and employees in electrical transmission and distribution. One form of the preventative information available is the "Near Miss Report" that can be found in every Safety Alliance Updates Newsletter. The Report will be a tool for employers and employees to utilize in their discussions of potential safety hazards and practices to avoid accidents.

The last part in outreach and communication is being more active in events of the industry. Participants will expose the Alliance by their involvement in a wide variety of industry related events.

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## Near Miss Report #1

### Bucket truck boom came in contact with energized distribution line

#### Details of Near Miss

#### Pre-Job Activities:

1. The line construction crew involved conducted the required daily job safety briefing. The JSB included a review and discussion of possible hazards that were present and others that may have occurred during the day of work, including the use of rubber line hoses on the distribution underbuild.
2. The Foreman laid out the sequence of work to all crew members.

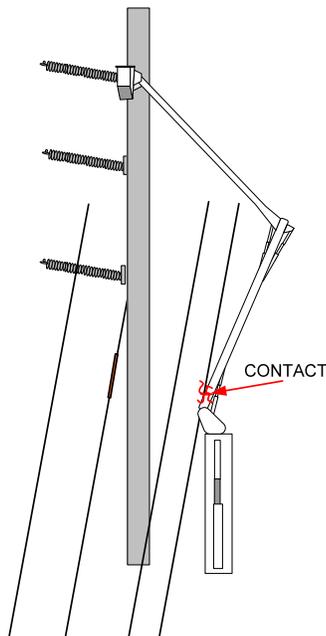
#### Sequence of events

1. The crew discussed the work plans for the day that included removing the existing conductor and clipping in the newly installed #1431 conductor.
2. Two crew members (Linemen) were assigned to clip wire after they installed grounds on the 230kv line that had a de-energized hold clearance.
3. They proceeded to install grounds and began clipping the new #1431 wire.
4. The rest of the crew began removing the old wire.
5. After the old wire was removed the two crew members were assigned to go to the other end of the job to start clipping wire.



6. The crew foreman accompanied both linemen to the north end to set up.
7. The foreman discussed with a crew member (Lineman) the method and safety equipment to be used to ensure that the distribution lines were covered prior to clipping. The foreman then left to check on the other crew members.
8. After completing set up and installing grounds, one crew member (Lineman) proceeded toward the static, without covering the distribution underbuild. The second crew member was working from the ground, getting materials ready and did not pay attention to what was happening in the air.

9. The boom came in contact with the distribution lines causing damage to the conductor and left a burn mark on the lower boom of the bucket truck. Neither lineman was injured.



10. The customer representative was notified, materials were acquired, and conductor was repaired.

**Root cause:**

Employees failed to follow the job plan and safe working procedures outlined in the tailgate conference

**Possible Contributing Factors:**

- Lineman on the ground was not paying attention and looking after the man going up in the bucket.
- Crew was in too big of a hurry to complete task and tried to take “short cut” measures.
- Crew members may not have fully understood job plan or pre-job briefing.
- Crew foreman spread himself too thin with multiple tasks in operation at the same time. This may have been influenced by the extreme difficulty of scheduling clearances.

**Corrective Action:**

- Management has concluded that both crew members did not follow the prescribed job plan and employed unsafe work practices. These actions are in violation of the company’s safety code. Management has also determined that these violations could have caused severe injury or worse to either one of the employees involved or to anyone that may have been in the immediate area. Given the severity of these violations, both employees were terminated.
- Management will conduct safety meetings with all crews serving on the customer’s property. Management will focus on re-enforcing safety rules emphasizing the job safety briefings and safe work procedures, methods and use of safety equipment.
- Management will counsel all foremen in developing work plans that will ease the supervision of each job task.
- Management will continue to give training to crew foremen in recognizing potential hazards, documenting them, and communicating them to crew members.

## *Outreach and Communication Cont'd*

The IBEW Fifth and Tenth Districts Annual Progress meetings along with the IBEW Fifth District Construction Organizing Summit will be three platforms where leaders in within the IBEW will be able to raise awareness of safety and the Alliance in 2007. Other events such as the Outside Apprenticeship Conference, training sessions, and local labor meetings will give our leaders the opportunity to address apprentices and linemen to inform them of the happenings with the Alliance.

## *National Promotion*

The third goal of the OSHA Alliance is to nationally promote the safety concerns and preventative measures that the participants throughout the Southeast are taking. The outline for this goal has two key components. The first component of this goal is raising awareness. Participants of the Alliance are continuing to raise awareness of and demonstrate their commitment to workplace safety and health whenever IBEW, SELCAT, and NECA leaders address groups. In doing this, the Alliance leaders hope to educate other outside organizations on the benefits of implementing a similar program for their employees.

The second aid in national promotion is the participation in discussions by the leaders in the electrical utility industry. Alliance participants will convene and participate in forums, round table discussions, and stakeholder meetings to discuss subjects such as, electrical injury and illnesses and common safety hazards. During these discussions, it is the aim of the participants to help forge innovative solutions to electrical

safety problems in the workplace or to provide input on safety and health issues. The picture to the left contains the original participants in the OSHA Alliance. Each person has a leadership position in the outside electrical utility industry or in the safety and health of its employees. These will be the forerunners in promoting the Alliance on a national level.



Front Row (left to right): Brian Imsand, Virgil Melton, Cindy Coe-Laseter, Bill Grimes, Steve Gaines. Back Row: Bill Green, Jody Shea, Robert Klein, Joseph Davis, and Paula Story

## *What is a Near Miss Report?*

After reviewing numerous accident and fatality reports, leaders in the Southeastern Outside Line Construction industry formed a committee to review "Near Miss Reports" filed by employees and employers.

A Near Miss Report is a report filled out by employees or employers that lists the events that took place during the workday that almost resulted in an injury or fatality. After listing the details of the incident, a report also contains probable causes of the situation and actions that were taken. The purpose of the Near Miss Form is to help prevent similar situations from happening by discussing and reviewing the occurrences of the

previous incident.

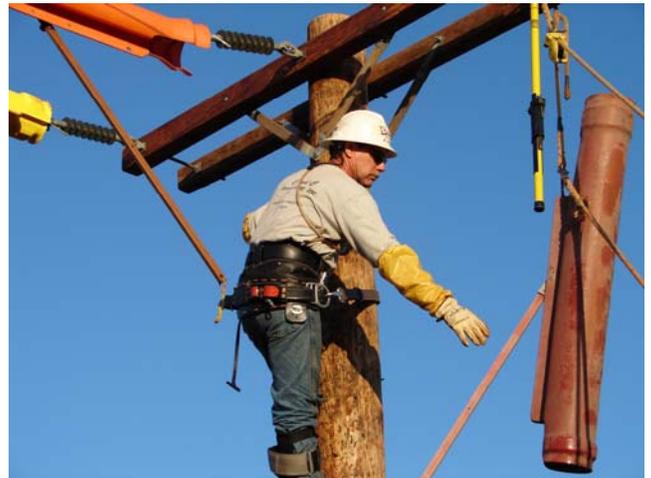
In cooperation with the OSHA Alliance, the Southeastern Line Constructors Chapter will include a submitted "Near Miss Report" in each Newsletter. The intent is for each employee in the field to familiarize themselves with the incident and discuss possible safety precautions with their fellow workers and employers. In the Report will be a detailed sequence of events as well as root causes and possible actions. Please review the following Report and discuss it with those on your work crew.

## *Alliance Accomplishments in Training and Education*

There have been many accomplishments by the OSHA Alliance and its participants since its conception, four year ago. The Alliance has made great strides towards accomplishing goals in each of the three categories. Below is a list of some of the highlights from the Training and Education of employees:

- In 2004, SELCAT developed a Foreman Class, which focuses on a range of safety and health issues with the goal of changing the safety culture.
- During 2004, SELCAT developed a Training Course Catalog, which lists all of the training courses offered by the organization.
- Developed training and education programs for employees focusing on safety and health issues related to the electrical utility industry is one of the goals of this agreement. The following training courses were developed or enhanced in 2004:

- o Lineman Supervision Class TTT
- o NJATC Grounding Course for non-members



- During 2005, approximately 320 Apprentices, 10 Foremen, and 25 Supervisors received training focused on safety and health through SELCAT.
- In 2005, three hundred (300) supervisory employees, including Foremen, received Safety Leadership training in the jurisdiction.
- During 2005, approximately 500 workers received industry related training.

\*More accomplishments will be reported in the upcoming Newsletters\*

## Safety Alliance Updates

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