Personal Protective Equipment – Dressed for Protection Fatality File

Lineman Electrocuted by Contacting Energized 4160-Volt Power Line

A 34-year-old male (victim) electric utility worker died after contacting an energized 4160-volt power line as he was attempting to replace a termination bracket bolt. The procedure took place within one foot of the energized wire, and the lineman was not wearing protective gloves. Earlier, he had had difficulty in handling a ¼" bolt and had to descend from an aerial bucket to retrieve it from the ground after dropping it. The victim had appropriate personal protective equipment available (high voltage gloves, safety glasses, and hard hat). However, according to a coworker, he apparently removed the gloves in order to improve hand dexterity after re-ascending in the bucket. The coworker, acting as an observer, lowered the unconscious victim within one minute of hearing a zap and seeing the slumped, unresponding figure. Emergency medical procedures (CPR and ACLS) were administered within the recommended time limits, but the victim was not resuscitated. MN FACE investigators concluded that, in order to prevent similar occurrences, the following safety guidelines should be followed:

- Personal protective equipment, protective devices, and special tools provided for work should be used by employees.
- Employees working in the vicinity of energized lines should consider the effects of their actions, taking into account their own safety as well as the safety of other employees on the job site.
- When performing tasks requiring hand dexterity, protective equipment other than insulating gloves should be considered.
- Use checklists prior to starting work to ensure use of

proper safety procedures and equipment.