Plumber Electrocuted

A 40-year-old plumber was electrocuted when he contacted frayed wires on his work light.

The victim was installing plumbing at a home remodeling site. To reroute a copper water line for the sink, he had to crawl under the house, carrying his small tool box and a 120-volt halogen work light. He?d been under the home for only a short period when the owner of the house heard his muffled screams. The owner called 911. When the paramedics found the victim, he was lying on top of the electrical extension cord with his face and shoulder resting on the work light. Investigators found that the ground for the home's electric system had been disconnected during the remodeling. Also, the portable work light appeared to have been damaged and the electrical wire was bare. This energized the work light and when the victim contacted the work light, the electrical current went through him. The plumber carried a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) in his tool box. It was rolled up and unused.

Investigators made four recommendations to prevent future tragedies of this nature:

- Use a GFCI when using cord-and-plug tools or equipment.
- Use low-voltage or battery-operated work lights whenever possible
- Relocate ground wires when they must be disconnected from plumbing.
- Institute a cord and plug assured grounding conductor program. ?