Worker Touches Energized Receptacle

A worker was electrocuted when he contacted a live electrical circuit, a metal casing on the electrical outlet and a wet-mopped floor at the same time.

He was plugging a small electrical appliance into an outlet located at the floor level. From evidence on his body, it appeared his index finger touched a prong of the electrical plug while his opposite hand rested on the grounded metal casing of the receptacle box. He was kneeling on a floor which had recently been cleaned with a damp mop. The electrical current passed across his chest.

He was having convulsions when co-workers found him. One worker touched him to check his pulse and received an electrical shock. A supervisor tried to shut off the power in a breaker box but could not find the switch. By the time the power went off, the victim had been in contact with the electrical current for an estimated three to eight minutes. Attempts at resuscitation by co-workers and an emergency response crew were not successful. The victim was pronounced dead upon arrival at a hospital.

Can you envision an incident such as this in your workplace when floors are mopped?

- Is electrical equipment safe and up-to-date? Are exposed receptacles made of non-conductive material? Are plugs designed so they are not energized until they are inserted completely?
- Are ground fault circuit interrupters installed in areas where moisture and electricity might meet?
- Are circuit breakers labeled accurately?
- Do you know better than to touch a person who is receiving an electric shock?
- Do you know CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)?