



# FASC Safety Council News

*Florida Association of Safety Councils -*

September ~ October, 2004 ~ *Take care! Safety is no accident!*

FASC provides a forum for Florida Safety Councils to examine and act on issues impacting driving, occupational and public safety. FASC develops safety education programs available to member Councils individually or collectively.

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**Contact A Safety Council Near You!**

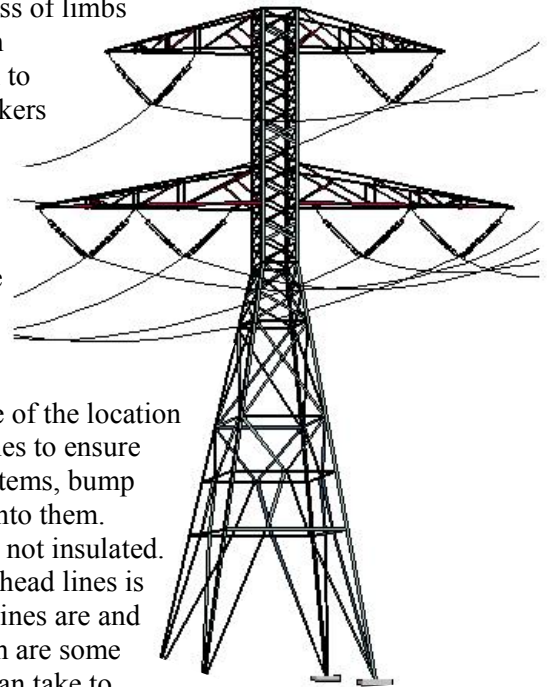
## Contractors and Electricity

The most valuable thing on any job at any time is *never* the materials, the equipment, the bottom line or the deadline. ***The most valuable quantity, without exception, is human life.***

Each year workers are seriously hurt or even killed by making contact with high-voltage electrical wires. In the process of clearing sites, pruning trees, moving equipment, digging trenches, roofing and other construction work, contractors face the hazards of potential injury or electrocution in the course of their work every day.

Many contractors and their crews work near power lines every day, and sometimes the work routine or multi-tasking causes them to forget that all it takes is one wrong move—to be complacent for just one minute may lead to life-altering burns, loss of limbs or instant death from contact with electrical power lines. In addition to equipment operators, ground workers must also use extreme caution, as they may be holding a crane boom cable or piece of hardware that becomes energized when equipment touches a line or a line comes down, thereby making themselves the electricity's path to the ground.

To be safe: Look up. Be aware of the location of any nearby overhead power lines to ensure you do not accidentally lift long items, bump crane booms or raise truck beds into them. Overhead power lines are usually not insulated. And, judging the distance of overhead lines is difficult. Knowing where power lines are and keeping a safe distance from them are some of the most important steps you can take to



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## Sitting Down On The Job



It's unclear whether the sign is supporting the controller or the controller is supporting the sign. Either way, he is in danger from both directions.

**Some of the traffic management failures apparent in these photos are:**

- Inadequate advance warning for approaching motorists.
- Lack of signage.
- Lack of protection for the controller.
- Inadequate and confusing control methods.
- Exactly why is the controller positioned mid-road? <<

## Workplace Violence DVD from NIOSH

A new training and educational DVD on preventing workplace violence has been produced by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). *Violence on the Job* is a 27-minute video that discusses practical measures for identifying risk factors for violence at work. To order the DVD go to website: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/email-pubs.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/email-pubs.html).

The DVD offers recommendations and resources to help keep workers safe. Information is based on NIOSH research and other authoritative sources. Each week in the U.S., 17 employees on average are murdered at work, and 33,000 on average are assaulted. Factors that place workers at risk for violence in the workplace include interacting with the public, exchanging money, delivering services or goods, working late at night or during early morning hours, working alone, guarding valuables or property, and dealing with violent people or volatile situations. <<

(Continued from page 1)

safeguard yourself and co-workers on the job.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations require that contractors and workers keep themselves and their tools at least 10 feet away from overhead lines of 50,000 volts or less while working. Generally, you should stay further away. For lines over 50,000 volts, stay even further away. Overhead Line Safety Acts enforced in most states stipulate that workers call their local electric utility prior to doing work if the work may place people too close to lines. Both parties can work together to find the safest solution for the work area.

*Call before you dig.* Digging into underground power lines can be just as dangerous as contacting an overhead line. In addition to possible injuries, contractors can also incur costs associated with repairing any damaged lines. *So call your local utility locating service before you excavate.* Position equipment carefully. Use a safety watch. If contact does occur, follow these guidelines:

- If you're on the ground, stay on the ground—and stay away. Coming close to the energized equipment can only increase the danger as the surrounding ground may be energized as well.
- Call 911 if someone makes contact with electricity and needs immediate medical attention.
- If contact with electricity is made while you're in your vehicle or equipment, and you can move the equipment away from the lines without pulling overhead lines down or underground cables out, do so. Otherwise, stay put, and don't move until the lines can be de-energized. This is your safest option until help arrives.
- If you must leave the vehicle because of fire or some other life-threatening situation, jump far away from the vehicle with both feet together. Hop to safety with both feet touching together. Never step down off the vehicle or touch the ground and the piece of equipment at the same time or you could be electrocuted.
- If a line has fallen on the ground, or on some other object or piece of equipment, always assume it is energized. Stay clear, keep others away. <<

# OSHA and the Competent Person

OSHA defines competent person as “one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and *who has authorization* to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them.” See OSHA standard 29 CFR 1926.

## Who designates a competent person?

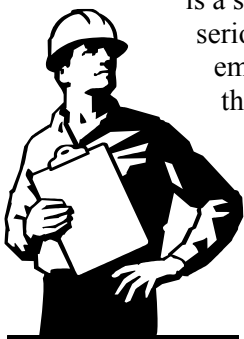
The designation of “competent person” must come from the employer, who identifies the person or persons who have the authority to make prompt corrective action in addition to skills in recognition and identification of potential hazards.

## How does a competent person fit in with a jobsite safety and health program?

A comprehensive safety and health program must provide for frequent and regular inspections of the job sites, materials, and equipment to be made by competent persons designated by the employer.

The 29 CFR 1926 construction regulations require that a competent person inspect various work areas such as scaffolding, excavations, stairways and ladders, asbestos abatement operations, welding and cutting zones, and steel erection sites. Some OSHA standards add additional specific requirements that must be met by the competent person.

Failure to have a competent person inspect these work areas results in OSHA inspectors issuing numerous violations each year. In many cases these violations are categorized as serious violations due to the fact that there is a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result, and the employer knew or should have known of the hazard.



Your local safety council can train a person in the skills necessary for the designation as competent person, *however*, the employer must be the one to designate any given person as a competent person. <<

# Drive Safely Work Week



Drive Safely Work Week (DSWW) is a national campaign that falls October 4 through 8 of this year. Featured topics include the following:

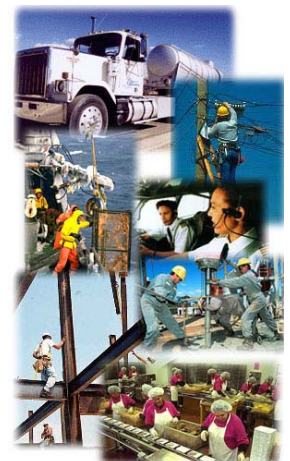
- Monday, Oct. 4 - **Add another second...Keep a safe following distance.**
- Tuesday, Oct. 5 - **Steer clear of trouble...Expect bad decisions by other drivers.**
- Wednesday, Oct. 6 - **Use good judgment...Just because you can doesn't mean you should.**
- Thursday, Oct. 7 - **Look ahead...Be alert to changing traffic conditions.**
- Friday, Oct. 8 - **Stay alert and focused...No one is crash-proof.** <<

# Drug-Free Workplace Incentives for implementing

Incentives for employers to implement a Drug-Free Workplace Program may include:

- Ensuring a safer workplace.
- A happier, healthier workforce.
- A premium credit applied to an employer's workers' compensation premium.
- Premium dollars are spent providing workers' compensation benefits to workers for bona fide workers' compensation accidents not drug or alcohol related.

An employer that implements a Drug-Free Workplace may be protected (in most cases) from workplace accidents that are a result of employees working under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Studies show that a well-planned program can increase productivity, reduce accidents, and decrease costs due to insurance claims. <<



# Halloween Safety 2004

With witches, goblins, and super-heroes descending on neighborhoods across America, the Suncoast Safety Council offers adults some safety tips to help prepare children for a safe and enjoyable trick-or-treat holiday. Halloween should be filled with surprise and enjoyment not disaster.

## Some helpful hints:

- ♣ Stay on sidewalks or walkways—stay out of the street.
- ♣ Look all directions when crossing streets.
- ♣ Cross streets only at corners or well lighted crosswalks.
- ♣ Wear light-colored or reflective-type clothing/costumes.
- ♣ Plan your route and share it.
- ♣ Have an adult go along especially with small children.
- ♣ Carry a flashlight.
- ♣ Keep away from open fires and candles.
- ♣ Only visit homes with porch lights on.
- ♣ Never go inside a stranger's house—stay outside.
- ♣ Use face paint rather than masks.
- ♣ Grownups, inspect treats before your little one indulges
- ♣ Don't eat candy if the package is already open. <<



Goulies and ghosts  
Witches—oh, fright!  
Pumpkins on boats  
Bumps in the night.

On Halloween Eve  
The Goblins are out.  
Monsters and princes  
Wander about.

Candy and apples  
Popcorn and gum  
Goodies for children  
Lots of great fun.

It's Halloween Eve  
Watch where you drive  
Make sure one and all  
Stay safe and alive!

—jaladd '04

The *Safety Council News* is published six times a year to keep business and industry informed of the Florida Association of Safety Council's activities and safety and health news and developments. NOTE: The information herein was obtained from sources believed reliable and the Association has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy. However, the Florida Association of Safety Councils does not guarantee that the contents of the *Safety Council News* are correct and statements from other sources do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Association.

