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Electrical Safety

Provided by Wendell Macnab
Association Coordinator

All businesses use electricity in some capacity. Electric shock is a potential risk that many workers face, but few think about. It is the employers' responsibility to reduce this risk and ensure a safe workplace. This can be done by following established policies and procedures designed to reduce the hazardous exposure to electricity.

Electrical risks present in most offices and businesses can be reduced by making sure that a ground fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, is used in all areas where electrocution could occur. A GFCI is designed to protect people from severe or fatal electric shock. GFCIs also can prevent some electrical fires and reduce the severity of others by interrupting the flow of the electric current.

In addition to installing a GFCI, an Assured Grounding Program should be used at work sites. Assured Grounding is a procedure for testing electrical tools and extension cords to assure proper grounding, polarity and resistance. The testing is done according to a predetermined schedule outlined in the program, which helps to identify faulty equipment.

The National Fire Protection Association, or NFPA, has published the "70E Standard for Electrical Safety Requirements for Employee Workplaces." This standard covers the full range of electrical safety issues. It is regarded as the tool to show employers how they can meet OSHA electrical standards. NFPA 70E includes guidelines for personal protective equipment required for different situations including Arc Flash hazards.

Arc Flash is a short circuit that flashes from one exposed live conductor to another, or to ground. The resulting ionized air creates electrically conductive superheated plasma that can reach temperatures of 5,000 degrees F or greater. The explosion takes less than one second and produces a brilliant flash, intense heat and a pressure blast equivalent to several sticks of dynamite.

Following NFPA 70E guidelines and using the proper PPE could turn such a life-threatening event into a testimonial for focusing on safety first.

For more information on workplace safety, visit www.scfaz.com or contact your SCF Arizona Loss Control Consultant.

For more information on NFPA 70E visit:
http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=70E

If you would like more information on workplace safety please contact your Association Coordinator.

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SCF ARIZONA
3030 N 3RD Street
Phoenix , AZ 85012
Phone: 602.301.7200
Fax: 602.631.2609
E-mail: wmacnab@scfaz.com

UPCOMING SEMINARS

April 2, 8am-12pm
ADOSH - Forklift Train-the Trainer
Phoenix
Visit www.scfaz.com to register

Prescott Safety Works Expo
March 24,
Prescott Resort Conference Center
1500 Highway 69, Prescott
www.regonline.com/Prescott

Phoenix Safety Works Expo
May 5 & 6,
Fiesta Inn Resort
2100 S Priest Drive, Tempe
www.regonline.com/scfphoenix

FREE Safety Plan Template for attendees with professional instruction on how to institute a plan in your business.

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