



PUBLIC SAFETY: A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

EEI OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING

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CRITICAL “TAKEAWAYS”

There is one thing you want to avoid at all costs:



If you are not at the table,
implement and buy thought out
a Public Safety Plan!



Four essential areas of Public Safety must be addressed in any plan:

- Health, Safety and Welfare of those communities and citizens where we serve
- The third-party contractors who work on our facilities or who may come into contact with our facilities while doing their jobs (First Responders).
- Our own employees or contractors
- Public awareness and outreach



Health, Safety and Welfare of Our Communities

- Imperative that our facilities are safe, well-maintained, and regularly inspected
- Policies and procedures must be in place to ensure that ongoing inspections, maintenance and surveys regularly occur (Standard Operating Procedures)
- Technicians and Field Representatives need to be aware of dangers, how to avoid them, and how to respond.

Health, Safety and Welfare of Our Communities

- Emergency Response Teams need to be aware of policies and procedures to “make safe” as promptly as possible.
- “Diligence” trumps “Response”
- In emergencies, calm professionalism trumps hectic maneuverings. When responding to an incident, remember that it is our responsibility to safeguard life first, then property, only if possible.



FIRST RESPONDERS

(Police, Fire and Emergency Personnel)

Face the greatest immediate risk from:

**electrical contacts,
natural gas leaks
and fires**

OVERHEAD LINE SAFETY



- Assume all lines are energized and potentially dangerous
- Keep personnel and equipment at least 10 feet from overhead lines
- Use a spotter who has no other duties other than to monitor equipment placement



OVERHEAD LINE SAFETY

- **OSHA requires greater than 10 feet of clearance from lines that are over 50,000 volts.**

EXAMPLE: Minimum clearance for a 500,000 volt line is 18 feet

- **Since there are no visible markers to identify a power line's voltage, call local electric utility for clearance and voltage information.**

DOWNED POWER LINES

- Secure the area
- Keep everyone at least 30 feet away from fallen power lines
 - Fallen transmission lines require 100 feet of clearance
- Stay clear of all downed lines and anything they are contacting (fences, trees, cable or phone lines)



DOWNED POWER LINES

- **Be extremely cautious when using water to fight fires near power lines. If water must be used, use only a mist or spray.**
 - **A steady stream of water can create a clear path for current to follow**

CAR/POLE ACCIDENTS

- Do NOT enter or contact vehicles that may be energized
- Instead, instruct victims to drive the vehicle away from the line if they can do it safely
- If they can not drive the vehicle away safely, tell victims to stay put until utility personnel give the “all clear”



CAR/POLE ACCIDENTS

- If victims are in danger from fire or other hazards instruct them to jump clear without touching the vehicle and the ground at the same time. They must land with their feet together and shuffle away with small steps.
- If victims are injured, disabled, or unable to safely exit the vehicle, your incident commander will instruct you how to proceed.

CONTRACTOR SAFETY

- Advise of training materials available – and make sure they have access to them
- Advise them to observe power lines and related equipment
- Advise regarding the use of a spotter
- Establish a clear boundary around power lines before work begins



CONTRACTOR SAFETY

**“Call Before You Dig”
for all underground work**

NOTE:

**Each state has its own notification center
and legal requirements regarding the excavation of
underground facilities**

CONTRACTOR SAFETY

CRANES AND POWER LINES:



Always consider all lines to be energized

Look up before you unload or load a crane from a truck or low-boy

Educate your crew about the dangers of overhead lines

Be Safe! Use a spotter – Don't Chance It!



VIRGINIA'S OVERHEAD HIGH VOLTAGE SAFETY ACT (“OHVSA”)

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

The law prohibits work within 10 feet of an overhead line carrying 600 or more volts. If anyone wants to work within the 10-foot limit, the law requires that mutually acceptable safety arrangements be made between the person performing the work and the utility that owns the line. The law provides an added incentive for compliance. If someone does not follow the law's requirements and an accident occurs, the burden and liability will lie with the party performing the work – not the line owner.

WHY WAS THE OHVSA NEEDED?

Virginia enacted its Overhead High Voltage Safety Act in 1989. Unfortunately, there were numerous injuries and accidents caused by contact with overhead lines. The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry found 47 known violations of the law during the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2002. The latest law's clearly-defined responsibilities provide contractors with the incentive to call and with utilities the opportunity to make job sites safe.



WHAT ARE THE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES CONTAINED IN THE OHVSA?

1. An expanded safety zone.

The newest law expands the safety zone around high voltage lines (600 volts or greater) by prohibiting work within 10 feet of the facilities unless mutually agreeable safety arrangements have been completed.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE LAW

2. Clarification of the duties of line owners and businesses.

The amendments clarify the duties of both the line owners and businesses that want to perform work within the ten-foot limit. The proposal requires persons responsible for such work to notify the utility promptly to request safety arrangements. To avoid confusion, the amendments eliminate the current provisions imposing a 48-hour waiting period between notification and the planned beginning of the work. Instead, the line owner is given five working days (from the date of the request) to initiate the agreed-upon safety measures.



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE LAW

Finally, the amendments make clear that the work cannot begin until all of the temporary safety arrangements are completed. The amendments also eliminate high voltage line owner or operator liability in cases where workers have not provided the utility notice as required by law.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE LAW

3. Incentives for Compliance.

Finally, the amendments incorporate the principle that most high voltage line accidents would be prevented if businesses had a more powerful incentive to call the utility before starting work. Contractors have an increased responsibility under the newly revised law to contact utilities before working near overhead high-voltage lines. The changes are intended to prompt contractors to become more conscious of the need to call the utility prior to beginning work. With such notification, many injuries and accidents could be prevented.

IS THE LAW IN EFFECT IN OTHER STATES?

Yes.

The indemnity provision is similar to those found in 19 of the 30 states with high voltage safety acts. The provisions are widely viewed as a significant incentive for businesses to comply with the requirements of the law. The indemnification language is intended to prompt contractors to become more conscious of the need to call the utility prior to beginning work thereby avoiding injuries or accidents.

DOES THE LAW ALSO APPLY TO UNDERGROUND LINES?

No.

This only applies to overhead power lines. Another Virginia state law addresses the underground line safety and damage prevention.

UTILITY EMPLOYEES ARE “EXPERTS”

- **Must know and be familiar with standard operating procedures, policies, regulations and safety manuals**
- **Regular training essential**
- **“Tail Gate” (or “OJT”) training helpful, but cannot substitute for rigorous formalized training**
- **Make sure training is regular, thorough, and encompasses both known and potential dangers**
- **Make sure employees participate in regular training.**

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- **Inserts**
- **Commercials**
- **Newspaper, other advertising**
- **Educational materials (Culver, ex.)**
- **Educating specific, targeted people, elementary and middle school students, quizzes, games, links that educate students on the dangers associated with electricity and natural gas (RP 1162, Code 192)**

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window titled "Contractor Safety - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar displays the URL "http://www.dom.com/about/safety/contractor.jsp". The page content includes the Dominion Energy logo with the tagline "It all starts here.", a navigation menu with links for Customer Service, Products, News, Investors, About Us, and Contact Us, and a search bar. The main heading is "Contractor Safety" with a "Print-Friendly Version" link. The text discusses safety hazards for contractors and provides a link to "Domsafety.com". A sidebar lists "Safety Topics" including Power Line Safety, Gas Safety, Rights-of-Way, and Contractor Safety. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications: Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, and Internet Explorer, along with the system clock showing 5:42 PM.

MH Desktop - MetaFrame Presentation Server Client [SpeedScreen On]

Contractor Safety - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address <http://www.dom.com/about/safety/contractor.jsp> Go Links >>

 **Dominion**
It all starts here.

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 **Contractor Safety** [Print-Friendly Version](#)

There are many safety hazards confronting contractors and construction workers on the job, particularly gas lines and overhead or underground electric lines. These hazards can be avoided by applying some basic safety principles and using common sense.

❖ Visit our Domsafety.com site for additional safety information for contractors.

Power Lines

There are many dangers associated with performing work in the vicinity of power lines, utility poles, guy wires, service drops and other power-related equipment. Reduce the risk of injury due to electric shock by following these safety tips:

Safety Topics:

- Power Line Safety
- Gas Safety
- Rights-of-Way
- Contractor Safety

Start | 2 Microsoft Outl... | Microsoft PowerP... | Microsoft Word | 4 Internet Exp... | 5:42 PM

Start | Logged Off - Microsoft In... | MH Desktop - MetaFra... | 5:42 PM

PUBLIC EDUCATION





SECRET WEAPON

AEGIS

(Insures 95% of public utilities)

Will come to your company and perform risk assessments targeting specific areas of concern and target specific issues to deal with them before they become an issue

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

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