



eSafetyLine

How to Help an Accident Victim

Unfortunately not everyone will STOP before acting and even some that do may still be involved in electrical accidents. When this happens what should be done to help the victim? The first step **after** calling emergency services or 911 for help is to turn off the electrical power to the area where the accident occurred. If the power is still connected and another employee touches the victim, this employee will also be shocked because they will become part of the circuit.

Sometimes it is not possible to turn off the electricity because the safety of others relies on it or the equipment can't be de-energized quickly. In this case the injured person should be pulled free of contact with the energized equipment. This can be done safely by protecting the rescuing employee with dry insulating material like paper or using a dry board, belt or other available nonconductive material to free the victim from the electrical contact. It is imperative to remember to **NEVER** touch the victim until the source of electricity has been removed. Any fire that may be present needs to be extinguished as soon as possible.

The first thing is to do while waiting for emergency services is to check for signs of breathing and a pulse. If neither is found, trained personnel should immediately begin CPR and/or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Another common occurrence during an electrical accident is that the victim goes into shock. When this occurs the victim must be kept lying down, maintaining the body's normal temperature by covering the victim with blankets or coats to help keep the body warm. Do not move the victim unless absolutely necessary. If you must move the victim to prevent further injury, move them as little as possible, especially if you suspect head and neck injuries could have occurred. If shock is suspected, don't give the victim anything to eat or drink until the emergency personnel arrive and determine it is safe.

If the victim has been burned, never attempt to remove burned clothing because this could cause further damage to the underlying tissue and make healing more difficult. It is important to elevate a burned limb to a position where it will be above the victim's heart. This helps to return fluids to the circulatory system and prevent body fluids from pooling in the damaged tissue this is called edema. It is important to remember to handle a burn victim with care, to minimize the amount of movement of the victim and that someone should remain with the victim until the emergency personnel arrive.

It can often be helpful to the emergency personnel if the points of contact can be located. The entry wound will be found anywhere on the body that came in contact with the electrical source. A burn is present at the site due to the high temperature at the surface.

The heat can evaporate the water on skin leading to a sunken or hollowed area. The exit wound is where the current comes to the skin's surface. A small hole or large abnormal area can be present depending on the size of the current and tissue resistance. The wound may look small but remember the damage is from the inside out and is therefore the damage is very deep.

Discussion Questions

After an electrical accident, should coworkers give the victim something to eat or drink?

Why is it important to elevate a burned limb?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/_____

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date