

Date: Thu, 30 Sep 1999 14:54:33 -0600
From: Meredith Brown <racer@lanl.gov>
Subject: Green Alert: Employee Receives Electrical Shock

Title: Employee Receives Electrical Shock While Modifying Office Cubicle Wall Partitions

Date: September 28, 1999 Identifier:1999-ALO-WID-0005

Lesson Learned Statement: Isolate electrical components when modifying office cubicle wall partitions to prevent accidental contact with energized terminals.

Discussion of Activities: While modifying wall partitions in an office cubicle, a maintenance technician received a mild electrical shock. The electrical circuit providing power to the wall panels is not routinely de-energized during removal and installation to minimize the impact to other cubicles on the same electrical circuit. Each wall panel is provided with a 120-volt hardwire plug power connector for connection to adjoining panels. The power connectors are removed by depressing two latches on each side of the power connector. Once the latches have been depressed, the connector can be unplugged from the panel. The hardwire connector on the subject wall panel had pre-existing damage on the protective cover, exposing the energized or hot electric terminals. The damage was located on the back side of the connector and could not be seen. While removing the power connector, the employee inadvertently contacted the exposed energized circuit. The employee received a mild shock to the middle two fingers on his left hand. An investigation was conducted and it was determined that the incoming power supply to the cubicle wall partitions being modified should be disconnected by removing the hardwire power connectors prior to commencement of work. This will eliminate the possibility of contacting energized electrical components during panel modifications. In addition, employees were instructed to use low voltage gloves while unplugging the energized incoming power connector to de-energize the circuit.

Recommended Actions: Develop a Hazard Assessment to identify a safe methodology for isolating electrical components when modifying cubicle wall partitions. This should include the wearing of low voltage gloves while unplugging incoming power supply.

Priority Descriptor: Green/Good Work Practices

Functional Category(s) (DOE):Electrical

Functional Category(s) (User-Defined) : Working on energized office cubicle wall partitions

Originator: Westinghouse Electric Corporation,Waste Isolation Division, Carlsbad, New Mexico

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Authorized Derivative Classifier: Not Applicable

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Keywords: shock, modifying wall partitions, isolation

References: WIPP Lessons Learned Bulletin, LL99-97