

Arc flash hazards: Are your employees trained?

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Previous editions of NFPA 70E required an arc flash hazard analysis. The 2015 edition now requires an arc flash risk assessment to determine if an arc flash hazard exists. If it does exist the employer must now determine the risk to employees and the required safe work practices and personal protective equipment (PPE). Are your employees trained in the latest requirements of NFPA 70E-2015 needed to perform risk assessments? Do they know what the electrical hazards are?

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS ACROSS THE BOARD

NFPA 70E-2015 states that training requirements apply to all employees who are exposed to electrical hazards where the risk associated with the hazards has not been reduced to a safe level by the installation requirements. The installation requirements of the National Electrical Code (NEC) requires all electrical equipment to have all covers or hinged panels installed and securely fastened closed, so that there are no exposed energized (live) conductors or parts of equipment. In this condition there is essentially no shock hazard or risk of an electrical shock or electrocution occurring. Also, in the installed state the equipment is not being operated manually or by

We all know the realities of electrical systems in industrial and commercial facilities. Covers are removed and equipment doors are opened in order to perform maintenance and testing of the equipment, which exposes personnel to energized circuits and the potential for electrical shock or electrocution, as well as arc flash burns. Most electrical equipment is operated manually or automatically on a regular basis, often several times a day. If the equipment fails to operate properly, an arc flash may occur. If the equipment is being operated manually or maintenance is being performed with the covers off or the doors open, and an arc flash occurs, the person(s) in close proximity are at risk of serious injury or death from arc flash burns.

A SAFER, WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE

Training all employees in the recognition and avoidance of hazards is a major key to a successful electrical safety program. It is recommended that a job/task analysis and task hazard analysis, including the shock and arc flash risk assessments, be performed in order to define the job description of all employees. Completing this analysis and risk assessment can help determine employees exposure or potential exposure to electrical hazards in the workplace. It can also establish the basis upon which the electrical safety program and procedures are written and determine the training requirements that will be required for all employees who may be exposed to electrical hazards.

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<http://www.ishn.com/articles/103525-arc-flash-hazards-are-your-employees-trained>

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