

Case 92. 32-year-old asbestos abatement worker was electrocuted by a 120-volt energized source.

On Tuesday, July 26, 2005, at approximately 5:30 p.m. a 32-year-old asbestos abatement worker was electrocuted by a 120-volt energized source. He was working in a tunnel-like space approximately four feet high applying encapsulant with electrical spray equipment to surfaces from which asbestos had been removed. While kneeling on vinyl sheeting he simultaneously touched the housing of the spray equipment and a metal pipe in the space. The worker became path to ground for the 120-volt current. The air in the space was humid from the spraying, and he was wearing protective covering that caused him to sweat. The equipment was not attached to a ground fault circuit interrupter. A fellow worker received an electric shock when he touched his partner, who had collapsed. CPR was administered to the decedent at the site, and he was subsequently transported to a hospital.

MIOSHA issued the following five Serious citations:

Serious:

GENERAL RULES, PART 1, RULE 114(2).

The employer failed to inspect the work site where the work was to be conducted in a wet atmosphere with electrical tools. The inspection would have included a hazard survey at the start of the job, before each shift, and elimination of any hazards prior to the start of work.

Serious:

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS, PART 17, RULE 1725(8)(D).

Trailing cords and extension cords shall be insulated to prevent shock or shorts. Bared energized copper conductors created a "hot/neutral" reversed condition. The outer insulation covering was damaged. There was a missing ground prong. The cord was lying directly on the bottom of a metal-framed entry to the crawl space where the weight of equipment and employees could pinch or damage it.

Serious:

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS, PART 17, RULE 1725(11).

No ground fault interrupter was used at a wall outlet that supplied 120-volt electrical power for tools used in a negative pressure enclosure that resulted in forming a wet environment. This placed sweating workers spraying a water-based encapsulant onto metal piping in a crawl space with a dirt floor at risk.

Serious:

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS, PART 17, RULE 1727(1).

An energized 120/240-volt panel did not have the individual circuits labeled or secured against accidental displacement. Energized circuits from this panel led into the work area.

Serious:

ASBESTOS STANDARDS FOR CONSTRUCTION, PART 602,
1926.1101(g)(5)(i)(B)(2).

The employer did not ensure that all the circuits within the negative pressure enclosure were either deactivated or equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter.