

Case 469. 19-year-old farm family member was electrocuted when the 21-foot-long metal pole he was using to knock down grain from the walls of a bin contacted an energized 4,800-volt overhead line.

A 19-year-old male farm family member was electrocuted when the 21-foot-long metal pole he was using to knock down grain from the walls of a bin contacted an energized 4,800-volt overhead line. Before placing newly purchased grain into the 20-foot tall bin, the remaining grain, which had been mixed with molasses, had to be removed from the bin. The top of the bin was located approximately 14 feet from the overhead lines. The decedent was using the 21-foot pole to bang the interior sides of the bin to remove the caked grain mixture. In the past, the farm used a wood pole or a mallet. Because the wood pole could not be located, the pole was selected. As the decedent was removing the pole from the loading hole at the top of the bin, the pole contacted the overhead line. He was found on fire, laying on top of the silo by a family member, who ran to a neighbor. The neighbor came to the bin and climbed the ladder with a hose in an attempt to extinguish the fire but the water pressure was too low. Buckets of water were handed up to the neighbor who extinguished the fire on the decedent and the bin. The farm owner estimated family members have been on top of the bin 12 times in the past year and two times to knock grain off the sides of the bin.

MIOSHA General Industry Safety and Health Division issued the following Serious violations at the conclusion of its investigation.

SERIOUS: ELECTRICAL SAFETY-RELATED WORK PRACTICES, GI PART 40:

- RULE 408.14005(4): When an unqualified person is working in an elevated position near overhead lines, the person shall be located so that the person and the longest conductive object he or she may be using cannot come closer to any unguarded, energized overhead line than the following distances:
 - (a) For voltages to ground of 50 kilovolts (kv) or less – 10 feet (ft.) (305 centimeters (cm)).
 - (b) For voltages to ground of more than 50 kV– 10 ft. (305 cm), plus 4 inches (in.) (10cm) for every 10Kv over 50kV.

There was an unqualified employee working less than ten (10) feet from unguarded and energized overhead lines which were inadvertently contacted, causing fatal injury on the *incident date*. (MIFACE removed the date).

- RULE 408.14002(2): Employees who are in occupations that are listed in table 1 face such a risk of electric shock and are required to be trained. Other employees who also may reasonably be expected to face a comparable risk of injury due to electrical shock or other electrical hazards shall also be trained.

There was an untrained employee that was exposed to electrical shock from unguarded and energized overhead lines which were inadvertently contacted, causing fatal injury on *incident date*. (MIFACE removed the date).

- RULE 408.14002(3): Employees shall be trained in, and familiar with, the safety-related work practices required by these rules that pertain to their respective job assignments.

There was an employee that was not familiar with safety related work practices and exposed to electrical shock from unguarded and energized overhead lines which were inadvertently contacted, causing fatal injury on *incident date*. (MIFACE removed the date).