



An open letter to America's Electric Power Industry Workforce

July 2021

Dear Colleagues,

We are committed to protecting the safety and health of all individuals employed in the electric power industry. This commitment is driven by strong support from industry leaders and the ongoing collaboration among industry partners to monitor, benchmark, and improve worker safety best practices.

Recently, we have seen an increase in serious injuries and fatalities (SIF) in our industry, including six fatalities and seven near fatalities in June. Reports of additional incidents are currently being reviewed.

The OSHA Electrical Transmission and Distribution (ET&D) Partnership—a formal collaboration of industry stakeholders working together to improve safety for workers in the electric transmission and distribution industry—is focused on addressing the causes for this increase and is reaching out to the industry workforce to ask for your assistance.

Electrical contacts were involved in the greatest number of these recent SIF incidents, which also included a “struck- by” incident, a trench collapse, an arc flash, and a work zone incident. We can prevent SIF events by working together, focusing on safety, and following industry best practices. We are redoubling our ongoing efforts to promote and support activities to prevent SIF and to achieve and maintain safety excellence.

Through field safety engagements, and other actions taken by leadership, you and your colleagues have opportunities to share your concerns and recommendations to improve safety performance. Each company's expectations and goals communicated to employees and reinforced by leadership will help to continue to ensure engagement with safety rules at all levels of operations.

As always, we are asking you to maintain a safety focus and to share information on hazards, near-miss events, and ways to improve work processes. Attention must be given to electrical hazards and the skills and techniques necessary to protect yourself from or avoid these hazards.

We also encourage, before beginning work, that you consult with your supervisor if you are unsure of how to safely perform any task associated with the job. Everyone is asked to review the proper use, installation, and verification of insulating/shielding materials and insulated tools for working on or near exposed energized parts of electric equipment.

ET&D Best Practices and refresher training is posted on the www.powerlinesafety.org website and in the ET&D Partnership App. We encourage you to download the app, become familiar with the content, and keep these valuable resources available for review. Following these practices or your company's safety requirements will help to ensure everyone's safety.

Please take the time **now** to refocus, to review safety practices, and to recommit to incident prevention. OSHA's Safe + Sound Week, a nationwide event that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and encourages the sharing of information and ideas to keep America's workers safe, is coming up August 9-15. During that time, we will hold an industry safety stand down. More information will be shared through the ET&D Partnership App and through our website.

Thank you for the work that you do, and we hope that we can count on your commitment and support.

Sincerely,

