

Electrical Safety Training: Needed in your Workplace?

Last year OSHA issued more than 1,100 citations with fines totaling more than \$1.1 million for violations of its electrical safety-related work practice rules (29 CFR 1910.331 - 1910.335). Here are the training requirements you must follow to keep from being next on the list.

Anyone who works with or near electrical equipment is at potential risk of electrical shock or worse. OSHA has compiled the following list of typical occupational categories of employees that face a higher-than-normal risk of an electrical accident:

- Blue-collar supervisors
- Electrical and electronic engineers
- Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers
- Electrical and electronic technicians
- Electricians
- Industrial machine operators
- Material-handling equipment operators
- Mechanics and repair persons
- Painters
- Riggers and roustabouts
- Stationary engineers
- Welders

Training requirements apply to employees who face a risk of electric shock that is not reduced to a safe level by the electrical installation requirements of the electrical systems standard.

Employees must be trained in the specific safety work practices that apply to their respective work assignments. They also must be trained in and familiar with the safety-related work practices that pertain to their respective job assignments.

Additional requirements for unqualified persons. Employees who are at risk of electric shock but who are not qualified persons (employees who have no familiarization with or training in the construction and operation of the electrical equipment and hazards involved) must be trained in electrically related safety practices. They must also be trained in and familiar with any electrically related safety practices not specifically addressed in the rule but that are necessary for their safety.

Additional requirements for qualified persons. Employees who are qualified persons (familiar with the construction and operation of the electrical equipment and the hazards involved) and are permitted to work on exposed, energized parts must be trained in the following:

- How to distinguish between live parts and other parts of electric equipment
- How to determine the voltage of live parts.
- Clearance distances specified in the regulation and voltages to which the employee will be exposed