Toolbox talk

Electrical hazards

Lockout/tagout, cords and GFCIs, energized gear and damaged equipment.

Electrical hazards usually look like nothing until someone touches them. This talk covers lockout/tagout, cords and temporary power, working near energized gear, and getting damaged equipment off the site.

Key point **Test before you touch. It's live until you've proven it dead.**

Lockout/tagout

Lockout/tagout is the most reliable way to keep people from getting hurt by live or stored energy. Incidents happen when someone assumes equipment is off instead of proving it. Panels, breakers, MCCs, HVAC units and conveyors all get isolated, locked, tagged and tested with a meter before work starts.

Don't go by someone's word or a label that should be right. On a construction site the rules are in OSHA 1926.417 and NFPA 70E.

Cords, temporary power and GFCIs

Plenty of jobsite shocks come from everyday cords, tools and temporary power, not high-voltage gear. Damaged insulation, missing grounds, water and overloaded circuits are the usual causes.

Inspect cords every day, keep them out of water and out of pinch points, and run them through a working GFCI. Temporary power needs real panels, breakers and weather protection instead of a spiderweb of cords.

Working near energized equipment

Arc flash happens in an instant, often during troubleshooting, panel removal or work too close to live parts. Respect the approach boundaries, read the arc-flash labels, and don't assume a panel is safe because it looks off.

Only qualified workers in arc-rated PPE open energized gear. Everyone else keeps their distance.

Damaged equipment and grounding

Electrical problems usually give warning signs. Buzzing panels, warm breakers, exposed conductors, taped-over damage, missing strain reliefs, a tool that shocks a little. None of them get ignored.

Damaged equipment comes out of service, gets tagged and gets replaced. Check grounding as part of routine inspections, especially on wet, muddy or steel-heavy sites.

Ask the crew

1. Who has a lock on this equipment, and has anyone tested it dead?
2. Have our cords and GFCIs been checked today?
3. What's the approach boundary on the panel we're working near?

Crew sign-in

Electrical hazards

Date _____ **Site or project** _____

Presented by _____ **Company** _____

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Signing means you attended this talk and had the chance to ask questions.