



Safety Alert

Safety Alert 93 – Electric Shock

Date

2 June 2021

Description

A first year apprentice, tradesperson and a fourth year apprentice were working in close proximity at a commercial premise, working together to install soft wiring connection sockets. The first year apprentice had been instructed to prepare the tails on the soft wiring connection sockets and to then clean up the areas that the team had been working in. He had been instructed to then go and find the tradesperson downstairs for his next task.

The first year apprentice had finished their task but did not go downstairs for further instruction. As the tradesperson was not readily available to ask for further direction, he had asked the fourth year apprentice if there were any tasks that they could assist with.

The fourth year apprentice instructed the first year apprentice to assist him with installing the tails into the wall, connecting them to the existing GPOs. The first year apprentice was unable to unscrew the screws on the back of the GPO due to them being damaged, so the fourth year apprentice then instructed him to move into the next room to carry out the same task.

Unfortunately, the next room was not on the same circuit and had not been isolated. As the first year apprentice was working on bringing in and terminating the tail, he touched the live wires behind the existing GPO, receiving an electric shock.

Root Cause

- Inadequate work procedures.
 - A fourth year apprentice is not permitted to supervise other apprentices and should never instruct another apprentice to do anything. This is a job for the supervising electrical worker.
 - The Identify, Isolate and Test the circuit before Touching (IITT) procedure was not followed – a personal danger tag or lock out had not been secured to the circuit the first year apprentice had been asked to work on.
 - The Test Before You Touch process had not been carried out. The first year apprentice did not have a volt stick with him and did not perform this valuable final check.
- Lack of knowledge / Inadequate supervision
 - The first year apprentice had been instructed to go and find the tradesperson downstairs for his next task. This is what he should have done.
 - This first year apprentice had not carried out work on existing circuits before and therefore should have been under direct supervision.



Contributing Factors

- Supervision – the first year apprentice was new to the host company and the tasks at hand and should have always been under direct supervision, with his tradesperson readily available.
- Risk Assessment – Although the host company had completed a SWMS for the site, the first year apprentice had not completed their Risk Assessment Checklist (RAC) or carried out their Identify, Isolate, Tag, Test (IITT) checklist.
- Test Before You Touch – The first year apprentice did not have a volt stick on them and did not test the cable prior to touching it.

Recommendations

- EGT apprentices must ensure that they DO NOT work in the vicinity of live parts.
- EGT apprentices are to ensure the “Test Before You Touch” principles are adhered to prior to commencement of all work activities.
- EGT apprentices should ensure that circuits have been isolated by the tradesperson and participate in the process (i.e. follow steps of isolation of the IITT in the RAC).
- EGT apprentices must complete their RAC or other approved personal risk assessment (e.g. the host employers or builders Take 5) prior to the commencement of all work activities.
- EGT apprentices must have a volt stick readily available at all times.
- EGT apprentices should be appropriately supervised at all times

Follow the ABC: Assume nothing, Believe no one, Check everything.

Feedback

For further information regarding this Safety Alert, please contact EGT on (08) 6241 6100 or speak with your Field Officer.