

Montana Ag Safety Program



Electrical Safety

- Assume all overhead wires are energized at lethal voltages. Never assume a wire is safe to touch – even if down or appears to be insulated.
 - Downed lines pose a serious threat. Report any downed lines to your power company immediately. If the line is in contact with your vehicle or other piece of equipment: stay inside until help arrives; if you are in immediate danger, jump from the vehicle landing with both feet on the ground at the same time, do not touch the vehicle, shuffle away from the vehicle without raising your feet.
- Know the location of ALL electrical shutoffs (for each piece of equipment, breaker boxes/service panels).
- Stay a minimum of 10 ft away from overhead lines. Use extreme caution while working at heights, handling long objects, or utilizing equipment in areas where overhead lines exist.
- Inspect all work areas for electrical hazards before work begins (above ground, at ground level, and below ground). Locate and mark all utilities before performing any digging operations!
- Avoid operating electrical equipment in damp or wet areas.
- Ensure all electrical equipment (cords included) are in good repair and free of defects. Repairs should be made only by those qualified to do so. Inspect wires and plugs before each use.
 - Take care to not overload wires (extension cords included) or circuits. Reduced performance and excessive heat build up are signs that overload is occurring.
- Proper grounding is crucial to electrical operations. Ensure all grounds are properly established.
- Utilize a GFCI (ground-fault circuit interrupter)– particularly in outdoor or damp environments.
- Never bypass a circuit breaker or fuse. Constant “tripping” may indicate a serious problem. Replace fuses only with suitable replacements (same size/type). DO NOT use any other item to replace a missing/faulty fuse.
- Use only double-insulated power tools or equipment with three prong plugs. DO NOT remove ground plug. Consider changing outlets to ensure all are capable of accepting a three-pronged plug.
- Discontinue use of any electrical tool that results in the user experiencing a tingling sensation or shock.
- Use extension cords only when unavoidable. Use only single cords that are free from damage.
- If someone receives an electrical shock:
 - Call for help immediately.
 - Stop the flow of electricity in the victim’s body by disconnecting or de-energizing the circuit if the victim is unable to pull away from the current source.
 - DO NOT try to remove the victim from the current source. Touching the victim could cause the rescuer to be shocked as well. DO NOT attempt to touch the victim until you are certain the source has been de-energized. (The same can be said for livestock that has been electrocuted. Do not attempt to rescue or remove livestock you suspect have been in contact with a live electrical current without first deenergizing the source.)
- Utilize appropriate lockout and tagout procedures.
- In the event of an electrical fire:
 - Unplug or deenergize the device
 - Use a Class C fire extinguisher – NEVER water (Class BC or ABC are also acceptable)

These safety rules have been written and provided to you for your safety. Your signature below indicates you have read and understand these rules, and further, that you accept the responsibility of always using good judgment to make workplace safety your number one priority.

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