

A **33 year old male** employee was **electrocuted** while trimming tree branches away from a 14.4kv primary power line when he contacted the energized line. He then fell 26 ft from the aerial lift from which he was working.

On the day of the incident, employees had arrived at the work location, a private residence, around noon where they were to trim trees around the residence. The employer had walked the employees through the work details before leaving the worksite to perform other duties. The employer left two employees and one Foreman at the work location to perform the work.

The final task at the site was to trim tree branches away from a powerline. A Nifty Lift SD50 was used by the victim to reach the branches. The Foreman stated he was on the phone approximately 30 feet away when he turned and saw a flash followed by a loud noise and a ball of fire. It was determined that he fell 26 feet from the aerial lift in which he was working.

It is believed that the victim contacted the line with his shoulder due a noticeable burn mark on the victim's left shoulder. A report by Cumberland Electric noted burn marks on the mid-rail of the aerial lift basket; the report also indicated that the distance of the primary phase to the basket was 15 inches and the neutral to the basket was 26.5 inches.

During employee interviews, it was determined there were two employees who had been trained to operate the aerial lift, the victim and the foreman. The foreman said he had received training and said they are not to operate the lift under or around main powerlines. The aerial lift training also covered not operating the aerial lift within ten feet of main power lines. The foreman stated that a harness was required when in the lift.

As a result of the inspection, it was determined the employer had not enforced the use of fall protection for the employee working in an aerial lift, had allowed unqualified persons to perform work closer than 10 feet of a 14,400 volt electrical line and had not reported the fatality within eight hours.

**Citation(s) as Originally Issued**

A complete inspection was conducted at the accident scene. Some of the items cited may not directly relate to the fatality.

**Citation 1 Item 1**

**Type of Violation: Serious**

**\$4000**

**29 CFR 1910.67(c)(2)(v):** A personal fall arrest or travel restraint system that meets the requirements in subpart I of this part was not worn or attached to the boom or basket when working from an aerial lift:

In that an employee working in an aerial lift while trimming trees was not wearing fall protection. The employee fell 26' from the aerial lift after contacting an energized power line.

**Citation 1 Item 2**

**Type of Violation: Serious**

**\$4000**

**29 CFR 1910.333(c)(3)(i)(A)(1):** When an unqualified person was working in an elevated position near overhead lines with voltages to ground rated at 50 kV or below, the location was not such that the person and the longest conductive object he or she could contact came closer than 10 ft. (305 cm) to any unguarded, energized overhead line:

In that an employee was working from an aerial lift when the basket came in contact with the energized overhead power line rated at 14.4 kV resulting in fatal injuries to the employee. The primary line was 15" away from the basket and the neutral wire was 26.5" from the basket.

**Citation 2 Item 1**

**Type of Violation: Other-than-Serious**

**\$1000**

**TDLWD Rule 0800-01-03-.05(1)(a)1:** Within eight (8) hours after the death of any employee as a result of a work related incident, the employer did not report the fatality to the TOSHA Division of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

In that a fatality that occurred on November 2, 2020 was not reported to TOSHA by the employer until November 10, 2020.

40 Electrocution—Insp#1502600 Boze's Bucket Works



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