

Investigation Process

What triggers an investigation by the N.C. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Division?

- A worker's death.
- Hospitalization of an employee, an amputation or the loss of an eye.
- The department may also receive information of a fatality or catastrophe from media reports or referrals from other government agencies.

How is the NCDOL OSH Division notified?

- An employer must notify NCDOL within eight hours of any work-related fatality. In-patient hospitalizations of one or more employees, any work-related amputation, and any work-related loss of an eye must be reported within 24 hours.

What will the investigation focus on?

- The investigation will usually be limited to the events surrounding the accident unless observations at the site indicate a broader investigation is needed.

What will happen during the investigation?

- An OSH investigator will go to the accident site and collect physical evidence, including photographs.
- The investigator will interview employees, witnesses and management officials about the accident to determine its cause.
- Any violations of safety and health standards will be noted and citations will be issued.

How long will the investigation take?

- An investigation can take anywhere from a few weeks to six months, depending on the complexity of the accident.

When are investigation results disclosed?

- Citations and penalties, if issued, can be released to the public on the issuance date.
- Other contents of the file cannot be released until the case is closed or final order on citations is rendered.



Employees working near power lines risk exposure to electrical hazards. Employers should take precautions to eliminate the hazards.

The Investigation

OSH investigators will seek to determine several factors, including whether:

- Employees maintained a distance of at least 10 feet when working near overhead power lines.
- Employer conducted a jobsite survey to identify hazards such as overhead lines.
- Conductive ladders were not used near overhead lines.
- Employees were trained to recognize and avoid hazards such as overhead power lines.
- Employer designated one person to observe the clearance of equipment operating near overhead lines.
- A buddy system was in place for work near overhead lines.
- Employees working near potential electrical hazards wore proper personal protective equipment.

Standards: 29 CFR 1910.269, Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution

Industry Type: General Industry

Accident Type: Electrocution

Statistical Data: From Oct. 1, 2013, through Sept. 30, 2014, NCDOL investigated 40 workplace fatalities.



Cherie Berry, Commissioner

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What programs does the Department of Labor have in place to prevent electrocutions?

Free training: Workshops, training and consultation in both English and Spanish.

Publications: Brochures and industry guides that address electrical hazards.