



September 3 — Stay Out of the Line of Fire

Electricians and millwrights were tasked with changing a motor. Both crews were working together in close proximity. We had the motor rigged up and a few bolts left in getting ready to move forward with removing the motor. I noticed one employee had been going under the motor to detach electrical parts.

I made sure to get his attention and let him know we were going to move forward with removing the motor and to stay out of the way.

When a load is rigged and ready to move, where you stand matters just as much as what you are doing.

In this situation, multiple crews were working together around a motor that was rigged and preparing to be removed. An employee was underneath the motor working on electrical components. Once the lift or removal began, that employee could have been directly in the path of the load.

The important takeaway is to recognize **when the job is changing**. A position that may have been safe a few moments ago can become dangerous when the load is ready to move.

The hazard wasn't necessarily that the employee had been underneath the motor a few moments earlier. The hazard was that the conditions were changing and the motor was now ready to move. When a job changes, the safe position can change with it. Everyone needs to recognize when the next step of the job creates a new line-of-fire hazard.

Before the motor is moved, everyone involved in the job needs to know:

- Where the motor is going
- Where the line of fire is
- Who is involved in the removal
- Where everyone needs to stand
- When the motor is going to move

If you're not directly involved in the removal, stay clear of the motor and the area where it could move.

Hazards

- Working underneath a suspended load
- Line of fire exposure
- Unexpected movement of the motor
- Multiple crews working in close proximity
- Communication breakdown between crews
- Being struck by or caught beneath the load

Words of Wisdom

A suspended load doesn't have to move far to cause an injury. Know the line of fire, communicate before the lift, and keep everyone clear of the load's path.

Pause and Think

- Is it ever acceptable to work underneath a suspended load?
- When a load is rigged, where should you position yourself?
- What happens when another crew is working in the same area?
- How do you know when a load is about to move?
- If you see someone entering the line of fire, are you willing to stop and warn them?

Closing Thought

Don't wait for the load to move before you move yourself. Know where the danger zone is and stay out of it.

See Something • Say Something • Do Something