



June 23 — That Doesn't Sound Right

<p>I tried to turn a roof fan on from the switch on the roof and it wouldn't do anything. Went down to the mcc and pressed the start button. When I pressed the button I could hear a weird noise in the breaker, and it kicked off.</p>	<p>Reported this to electrical supervisor.</p>
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Most equipment failures don't happen without warning. The warning signs are often there. A strange noise. An unusual vibration. A smell that wasn't there yesterday.

The question is whether we pay attention to them.

An employee attempted to start a roof fan using the switch located on the roof, but nothing happened. Thinking the issue might be with the local switch, he went to the MCC and pressed the start button. When the fan attempted to start, he heard an unusual noise coming from the breaker before it immediately tripped.

Recognizing that something wasn't right, the employee stopped troubleshooting the issue and reported it to the electrical supervisor for further investigation.

It can be tempting when equipment doesn't operate as expected to keep trying. Press the button again. Reset the breaker. See if it works this time. Most of us want to solve problems and get equipment back in service as quickly as possible.

The challenge is that abnormal sounds, repeated trips, unusual smells, and unexpected equipment behavior are often signs that something has already changed within the system. Continuing to operate equipment without understanding the cause can increase the risk of equipment damage, electrical hazards, or injury.

In this situation, the employee trusted what he observed. Instead of assuming the breaker had simply tripped for no reason, he recognized the abnormal condition and involved the people best equipped to investigate it safely.

That's not slowing down the job. That's preventing a bigger problem.

Hazards

- Electrical faults
- Equipment damage
- Unexpected equipment failure
- Electrical shock hazard
- Arc flash potential
- Uncontrolled restart attempts

Words of Wisdom

Equipment often gives us clues when something is wrong. Don't ignore unusual noises, smells, vibrations, or repeated trips. If something doesn't seem right, stop and investigate before proceeding.

Pause and Think

- What warning signs have you noticed before an equipment failure?
- Why are people sometimes tempted to keep resetting breakers or restarting equipment?
- What should you do when equipment behaves differently than expected?
- How can small abnormalities become larger problems if ignored?
- Who should be involved when an electrical issue is suspected?

Closing Thought

When equipment starts talking, listen. The warning you hear today may prevent the failure you experience tomorrow.