

Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution: Minimum Approach Distance, Information Transfer and Training Requirements

This fact sheet will help employers engaged in power generation, transmission and distribution work understand some of the revised OSHA regulations. It highlights the new requirements for minimum approach distances, information transfer, and training in both §1910.269 and §1926, Subpart V. The revised rules contain identical requirements, except for the power generation and line-clearance tree-trimming rules, which are covered in the General Industry rule.

Minimum Approach Distance (MAD) for work on or near energized systems

- The employer must establish a MAD by using the tables in the standards. *For voltages over 72.5 kV, the employer must also determine the maximum anticipated per-unit overvoltage (T), and use it in calculating the MAD.*
- Employers may use a MAD from Tables 14 through 21, in Appendix B to 29 CFR 1910.269 or Tables 7 through 14 in Appendix B to 29 CFR Part 1926, Subpart V, *provided that the employer follows the notes to those tables.*
- The employer must determine a T value, through engineering analysis, or assume a T value from Table R-9 in §1910.269, or Table V-8 in §1926, Subpart V.
- These T values can be reduced by modifying the operation of circuit breakers, or other switching devices on the system, or by using devices such as portable protective gaps and surge arrestors. Section 4.8 of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Standard 516-2009 describes various methods for reducing T values.

Information transfer requirements between host and contract employer

- *Who is a host employer?* A host employer is an employer who operates, or controls the operating procedures for, an electric power generation, transmission, or distribution installation. In many cases, the host employer is an electric utility company.

- *Who is a contract employer?* A contract employer is an employer who performs work covered by either §1910.269 or §1926 Subpart V, under contract with a host employer.
- Before work begins, host employers must inform contract employers of specific safety-related information so that contract employers can protect their workers from known hazards. The specific safety information is contained in the revised rule.
- The *host employer must* develop and implement procedures that adequately communicate the required information to all contractors.
- The contract employer must ensure that each of its workers is instructed on the relevant hazardous conditions that the contract employer is aware of as a result of the information transfer from the host employer. OSHA anticipates that much of this instruction will occur during job briefings, which are required by §1910.269(c) and §1926.952.
- The contract employer must advise the host employer of any unique hazardous conditions and any unanticipated hazardous conditions found during the contract employer's work.
- The contract employer and the host employer must coordinate their work rules and procedures so that each worker for both the contract employer and the host employer is protected as required by the standards.

Training Requirements

Adequate training is critical to worker safety. *OSHA frequently cites employers for a lack of adequate training.* Some key training requirements include:

- Each worker must be trained in, and familiar with, the safety-related work practices, safety procedures, and other safety requirements in the revised rule, as well as any other safety practices (including emergency procedures), related to the work.
- The amount of training for each worker must be determined by the risk to that worker from the hazards involved.
- In addition to the training described above, to be considered a qualified person a worker must also be trained and competent in the skills, techniques and practices listed in §1910.269(a)(2)(ii) and §1926.950(b)(2).

For additional information, see www.osha.gov/dsg/power_generation.

Workers' Rights

Workers have the right to:

- Working conditions that do not pose a risk of serious harm.

- Receive information and training (in a language and vocabulary the worker understands) about workplace hazards, methods to prevent them, and the OSHA standards that apply to their workplace.
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect their workplace if they believe there is a serious hazard or that their employer is not following OSHA's rules. OSHA will keep all identities confidential.
- Exercise their rights under the law without retaliation, including reporting an injury or raising health and safety concerns with their employer or OSHA. If a worker has been retaliated against for using their rights, they must file a complaint with OSHA as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days.

For more information, see [OSHA's Workers page](#).

How to Contact OSHA

For questions or to get information or advice, to report an emergency, fatality, inpatient hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye, or to file a confidential complaint, contact your nearest OSHA office, visit www.osha.gov or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.

This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory-impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: (877) 889-5627.

For assistance, contact us. We can help. It's confidential.



www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA (6742)



U.S. Department of Labor

DOC FS-3873 11/2016