

## Falls at the Same Level in the Electric Power Utility Industry



145 electric power utility workers were seriously injured in falls on stairs and at the same level in the years 2000-2004, resulting in nearly 11,000 days off work.



The injuries from these accidents were so serious, the workers had to take time off from work or in some cases were permanently disabled. These serious injuries are costly and affect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the base rate of \$1.28 per hour per employee paid by contractors and employers in 2006. If your company has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your “experience rating” could increase by as much as 25% in one year to \$1.59 per hour per employee.

Stated in another way, if you had 5 full-time workers and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$13,312 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$3,224 more or \$16,536 in premiums in 2006.

### Causes of fall injuries

Injuries to workers commonly result from falls on stairs and at the same level (including falls against objects). Falls occur when workers lose their footing or balance from

- slipping on loose gravel or wet, icy, or muddy steps, ground, grass, boards, or other objects
- tripping over ivy/vines, vegetation, debris, rocks, cables, curbs, or other objects
- misstepping on uneven terrain or surfaces, slopes, stairs, or when getting off the pole
- stepping into holes, openings, or ditches
- breaking through worn boards or steps



Environmental conditions and decreased visibility contribute to increasing the risk of falls and injuries occurring.

### Ways to prevent falls

- Make sure areas on the ground where you are working or stepping are clear of debris, vines, rocks, and other potential hazards.
- Keep shoes and work surfaces dry and clean of ice, water, mud, oil, and grease. Wear slip-resistant shoes to help with traction.
- Avoid cutting across yards/fields overgrown with vegetation and grasses that may block you from seeing holes. If you must cross a yard or field, watch where you step and walk carefully and slowly.
- Do not carry items that may block your view of the ground in front of you.
- Use adequate lamps/lighting to improve poor visibility of the work area.
- Avoid stepping on boards; they may be worn and break or may move when you step on them.
- Always watch where you are going and be aware of any potential hazards. Walk or move facing forward.



Slipping on ice and tripping on vines or objects are common causes of falls.