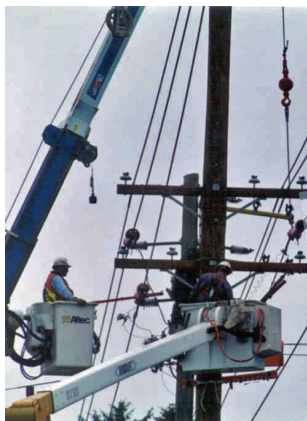


Overexertion in Electric Power Distribution

During 2000–2004, electric power distribution workers experienced 261 serious overexertion injuries resulting in over 18,000 days off work.



Serious overexertion injuries are costly and affect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the average base rate of \$1.28 per hour per employee paid by electric utility 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 10 full-time electric utility employees and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$25,600 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$6100 more or \$31,700 in premiums in 2006.

Causes of overexertion injuries

Over 30% of all serious injuries among these utility workers were due to overexertion.

Overexertion injuries often involved lifting/carrying/pushing/pulling:

- Conductors
- Office equipment
- Shovels
- Boxes/cartons
- Pipes and fittings
- Wrenches
- Towers/poles



Truck with magnetic lifter



Hydro excavation machine

Ways to prevent overexertion injuries

Roll or wheel items when possible rather than lifting and carrying (e.g., carts, dollies, hand trucks, wheelbarrows, etc.)

Use mechanical devices to lift heavy items when possible (e.g., forklifts, jib cranes, backhoes, etc.)

Use hydro excavation machines to dig holes to minimize manual digging and labor time.

Consider using new pole pulling devices that make this activity less physically demanding.

See: <http://www.sunriseequipment.com/articles.aspx?article=373>

Use battery powered cutters/crimpers, not manual

