

Mine Safety Agency Issues ‘Close Call Alert’ Related to Surface Power Lines

May 8, 2017

The Mine Safety and Health Administration has issued a “close call alert” after a tractor trailer contacted an overhead ground wire after dumping a load of gravel, causing significant damage, but no injuries.

The agency said in [the alert](#) that because the tractor trailer did not maintain the recommended 10 feet of clearance between the equipment and the power lines, after contact, the wire pulled and snapped a ground wire on an adjacent power pole. It said the second wire caused the energized 13,800-volt wires to arc and trip the power. MSHA said there was a possibility of an electrocution.

MSHA provided the following best practices:

- Ensure that high-voltage power lines are de-energized before operating equipment within 10 feet of them.
- Be aware of the location of overhead power lines and avoid the risk of electrocution by choosing a route for equipment that avoids potential contact.
- Contact the local power company if an incident occurs.
- Remember that some equipment may have a higher profile during transport.
- If a tractor comes in contact with power lines, remain in the tractor and have someone contact the power company to shut off the power.
- If a tractor contacts power lines and a fire erupts, exit from the tractor and get away as far as possible. Never allow any part of a body to touch both the equipment and the ground at the same time.

Contact a Jackson Lewis attorney for guidance regarding this and other safety and health advisories.

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