

Avista Pole Contact Accident Report October 26, 2016

Reported by
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Accident Investigator
Local 77

November 4, 2016

Avista Pole Contact

On Wednesday October 26, 2016 at approximately 11:30 am, an electrical contact occurred while setting a 50' class 3 Cedar tangent pole, on the South Hill in Spokane Washington. Temperature was 48 degrees, cloudy, damp and raining on and off that morning. The overhead line crew was made up of a 4-man crew. (1) Line foreman, (2) Journeyman lineman, and (1) Operator. Crew equipment consisted of a Digger Dereck, Two-man bucket truck, Support pickup and the operators, dump bed, trailer and hoe.

The work to be performed on this day was to inner set a 50' 3 phase tangent pole in the 556 AAC, tie in the primary and prep for a utility arm. The pole was then going to be prepped for 3 phase risers, to be installed at a later date. This pole was being set mid span with the 2/0 neutral down low on the street side of the pole. It also had 2 runs of triplex and a communication line running parallel with the neutral.

With a Hot Line Hold in place on a S.E. feeder, and tailboard debriefed, contract flaggers were then set up to help with the flow of traffic.

The equipment was set up on the on the 2-lane roadway. The line truck and bucket were set up on the fog line of the roadway and the 50' pole was out in the field. The pole was framed on the ground and pole wrap was added to the top portion of the pole. The crew installed an insulated cover on the center phase, above the pole hole.

The pole was now ready to be raised into position, 2 linemen (both with rubber gloves on) were at the base of the pole while being raised. While the foreman was raising the pole into position, he ran out winchline before he could get it into the grabbers. The 3rd extension was used to stinger out in order to gain the head room needed. When he started stinging out, the pole butt came off the ground.

At this time the pole wrap and cover were against each other, as the pole was being moved further to get into the grabbers the pole made contact outside of the guard, and below the wrap. The pole made contact for a brief moment, before the pole grabbers were closed. The feeder did not trip nor show any feeder activity One of the linemen said he felt what was similar to a 120-volt shock. The pole was cabled down and set into the hole, and partially back filled. The journeyman told the foreman what he believed to be a shock. The foreman reported the incident to a General Foreman. While this was being reported, the crew tied in the center phase, hung the arm and tied in the outside phases.

When the general foreman showed up at the site, he took the lineman to a Hospital, so he could be evaluated. The doctors did a series of test on him, and found no evidence of an injury and was released.

After the incident occurred (incidental contact items were looked at). Line covers were found to be of some concern (Not all are stored or cleaned in a consistent manner) due to the rain and the saturated pole. The lineman felt his rubber glove may have tracked over. (He had dry

leathers on at the time of the pole setting) though he felt the leather protectors were too long. The gloves were visually inspected as well as brought to a testing lab and tested. Gloves passed all testing. After much concern the leather portion to these gloves were looked at as well as all the issued personal and truck protectors, that came within 1 to 2 inches of the rolled rubber cuff.

The leather protectors are now being replaced with a shorter protector, gaining at least 3 plus inches' s of separation to the rolled rubber cuff.

Guards are to be bagged, and visually inspected for wear and contamination.

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