



GALENA FIRE DEPARTMENT
Standard Operating Guideline
POWER LINE INCIDENTS

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Purpose: To establish standards for GFD operations for power line incidents, including safety considerations, responsibility, precautions, notification, and resources.

As a critical general rule, consider all wires as live until confirmed otherwise by the power company. Power line and electrical utility equipment is to be shut off only by electrical utility personnel. Do not attempt to cut the power lines.

The power company shall be notified immediately upon arrival and confirmation of need via Dispatch. Make sure to provide Dispatch of the scene situation, including life-threatening situations, victim involvement, fire hazards, exposures, exact location, and routing instructions.

Placement of emergency apparatus

- For transmission line breaks, clear an area equal to, or greater to the span between poles on both sides of the break.
- Do not park vehicles under any overhead power lines
- Park all vehicles at least one full span away from the break.

Restricted Access of Personnel

- It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to secure a 'hot zone' area and to restrict all emergency personnel (Police, Sheriff, EMS, Fire Rescue) from this area, unless ordered to actively engage in a life rescue while using necessary equipment and safety precautions.
- All GFD personnel actively engaged in life safety operations will use full PPE while in and near the hot zone.
- If victims are in contact, or suspected to be in contact, with wires regarded as energized, there will be no physical contact by emergency personnel.
- Do not attempt to rescue victims entrapped in a charged vehicle. Instruct occupants to stay inside vehicle until the power is turned off.

Fire Extinguishment

- Let pole top and cross arm fires burn until the electricity is shut off by the power company.
- Do not use a solid or straight hose stream when an electrical hazard exists.
- Fire in electrical transformers at ground level (Class C fires) should be extinguished with a dry chemical (A-B-C) extinguisher.
- Permit above-ground transformers to burn until electricity shut off by Power Company.
- Transformer fires can present a hazardous materials situation with cooling oils containing PCBs that are both flammable and cancer-causing.

Safety Considerations

- Be aware that energized lines can recoil and 'jump'.
- Fences and metal guardrails will conduct electricity.
- Standing water, other liquids, and saturated ground will conduct electricity.



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Safety Considerations (Continued)

- Observe the area for weakened overhead power lines and utility poles on both sides of the break.
- Avoid looking directly at arcing electrical lines.
- 'Always keep looking up'- Be careful when raising and lowering ladders, or using hose lines and other equipment near overhead lines.
- Aerial and ground ladders must be kept at least 10' from 50kVA and less power lines.
- The ground around a downed power line may be charged several yards away from the point of ground contact.