## Tips for Firefighters

- Keep ladders, booms, water tower apparatus, and other equipment at least 10 feet from power lines.
- Always use a spotter. Beware: outriggers may settle and wind may move wires.
- Use standard practices to fight small fires around power poles. Notify the utility to inspect charred poles.
- Use water spray (not a stream) to fight fires near downed wires.
- Stay away from overhead wires; the fire may make them fall.
- Most electrical hazards in structure fires are low voltage—under 600 volts. This voltage can be fatal.
- Never cut service wires.
- Do not remove electrical service meters. This may not cut off electricity and may cause and explosion.

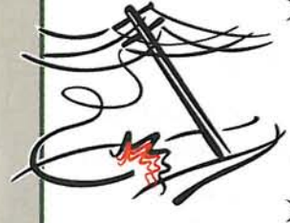
**Never disconnect electrical services.**

## A Review of Safety Basics

When you arrive on the scene of an accident, downed power line, or fire:

- Always assess the scene for electrical hazards. Identify everything that may be energized, including vehicles, fences, and victims.
- Secure the area.

- Do not attempt to help victims in contact with power lines or energized objects until the electric utility says it is safe to do so. You could be injured or killed.
- Contact the electric utility immediately.



- Assume all power lines are energized at high voltage even if they are not sparking or arcing.
- Expect the unexpected.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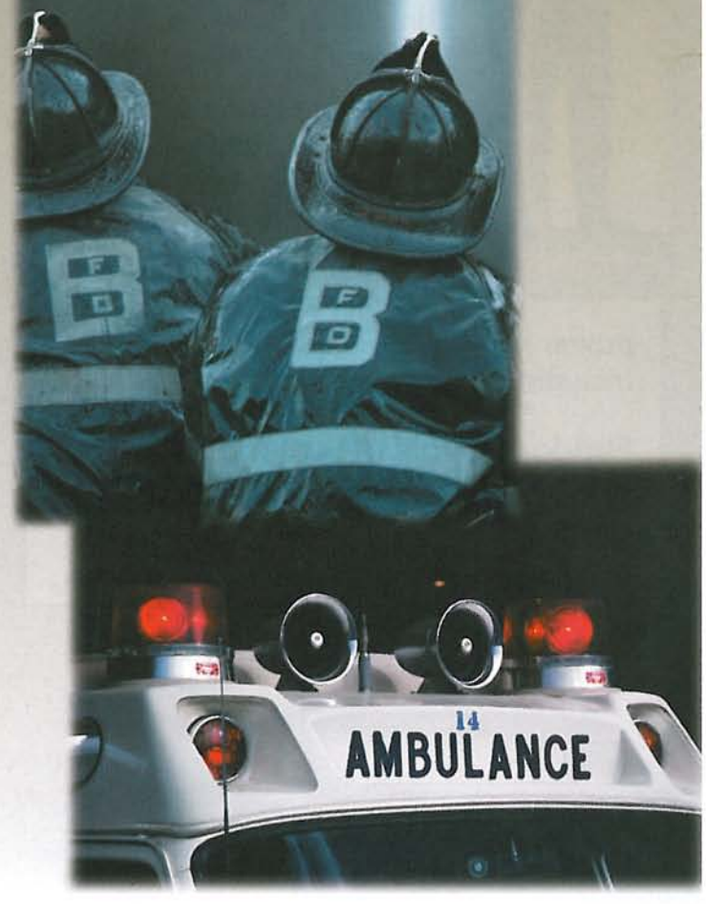
# ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

First on the scene, you face the greatest risk from electrical hazards. Understand the potential dangers and know how to deal with them safely.




**Adams Electric Cooperative, Inc.**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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## Stay Out of Electricity's Path

Electricity always aggressively seeks a path to ground. Becoming part of electricity's path can result in serious injury or death.

Electricity flows easily through conductors like water, your body, tree branches, poles, and ladders.

Insulators stop the flow of electricity, but an insulator can become a conductor if it is wet.

Assume everything in contact with a downed power line could be energized—including the ground nearby.

### Fundamentals of Staying Safe:

- Never touch or move fallen wires.
- Never enter substations unescorted.
- Never disconnect electrical services.

## Substation Emergencies

Substations receive very high voltage electricity and step it down to levels customers can use. Only electric utility employees are prepared and authorized to deal with substation equipment.

Substations may stand alone or be located atop or inside buildings, mounted on concrete pads, or buried in underground vaults.

Substation emergencies present extreme hazards to the first responder, with danger of toxic smoke and explosions. Equipment cannot be salvaged, so protecting a substation is dangerous and unnecessary.

### In a Substation Emergency:

- Never enter a substation unescorted.
- Secure the area to protect the public.
- Wait for utility representatives.
- Prevent the fire from spreading beyond the substation.

## Downed Wire Emergencies

Always assume a downed wire is energized at high voltage, even if it is not arcing or sparking. Never touch fallen wires or anything they are touching; death or serious injury could result.

**When confronted with a downed wire emergency:**

- ✓ Survey the scene for all objects that may be energized.
- ✓ Secure the area.
- ✓ Contact the local utility.
- ✓ Do not attempt to help victims in contact with electricity until a utility employee says it is safe.

**When a power line has fallen on a vehicle:**

- ✓ Never touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
- ✓ Tell passengers to remain in the vehicle.
- ✓ If the vehicle is on fire or in danger of exploding, instruct passengers to exit without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. They should jump out, landing with both feet together, and then shuffle away with tiny steps.

**Anything touching a power line could be energized.**

**Never enter a substation unescorted.**

**Never attempt to move a downed wire.**