



Occupational Safety and Health Administration

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OSHA News Release – Atlanta Region

U.S. Department of Labor

February 28, 2024

US Department of Labor cites Alabama electrical contractor after 22-year-old worker suffers severe burns at Auburn worksite

Smith's Electrical Service & Repair LLC willfully exposed workers to shock, burn hazards

AUBURN, AL – A Camp Hill electrical contractor could have prevented a 22-year-old electrician from incurring life-threatening arc flash burns by following safety procedures they knew were standard in the industry, a U.S. Department of Labor investigation found.

The department's [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) found that on Sept. 26, 2023, the Smith's Electrical Service & Repair LLC employee had been guiding wires through an electrical cabinet when the ground wires hit live components, resulting in an arc flash that caused severe burns to the worker – injuries so serious the worker required hospitalization.

OSHA cited the employer with a willful violation for requiring employees to feed wires through electrical cabinets that were not de-energized, exposing them to shock and burn hazards.

“The employer unnecessarily exposed workers to the hazards created when working with energized, electrical cabinets. Their actions tragically resulted in a worker suffering burn injuries that may require life-long attention and care,” said OSHA Area Office Director Jose A. Gonzalez in Mobile, Alabama.

In addition, OSHA cited the employer with three serious violations for failing to train workers in recognizing hazards, permitting employees to work on live electrical cabinets without training in safe electrical work practices, and allowing workers to conduct work tasks without proper protective equipment.

“This awful incident should never have happened. Using safe electrical work practices can save lives and avoid unnecessary incidents such as this one,” Gonzalez added.

OSHA [proposed \\$93,566 in penalties](#) for Smith's Electrical Service & Repair.

Energy sources including electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, or other sources in machines and equipment can be hazardous to workers. During equipment servicing and maintenance, an unexpected startup or release of stored energy can result in serious injury or death to workers. Proper lockout/tagout practices and procedures safeguard workers from hazardous energy releases. OSHA's Lockout/Tagout [fact sheet](#) describes the practices.

Smith's Electrical Service & Repair LLC is based in Camp Hill and employs 25 workers. Five workers were at the Auburn jobsite at the time of the incident.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA, or contest the findings before the independent [Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission](#).

[Visit OSHA's website for information on developing a workplace safety and health program](#). Employers can also contact the agency [for information about OSHA's compliance assistance resources and for free help on complying with OSHA standards](#).

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A - Z Index

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