

Worker Fatality Alert

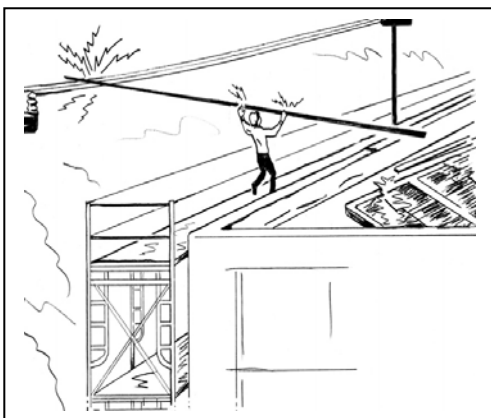
August 2009

Two Solar Energy Installers Die From Electrical and Fall Hazards

Prevention Points

- Train all workers on the hazards of electrocution from high voltage power lines
- Protect all workers from falling through skylights

The **California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (CA/FACE)** program tracks and investigates cases of fatal injuries at work, and makes prevention recommendations for employers and employees. In the past year, the death of two solar energy installers has highlighted the need for all solar energy companies to review current workplace safety programs and be sure those programs include assessments for electrical and fall hazards.



Worker touching electrical power line with metal bracket

The first worker was electrocuted and fell to his death off a scaffold after a 20-foot metal bracket made contact with a nearby high voltage power line. A hazard analysis of the worksite had not been performed before work was started, and the victim had not received specific training on high voltage electrical hazards. The second worker fell through a roof skylight after he tripped while carrying solar panels. Although a hazard assessment of the worksite had been performed before starting work, the skylight was not guarded and the victim was not wearing personal fall protection.

A complete report with safety recommendations about the first incident ([#08CA006](#)) is available. See [the Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation Program website \(www.cdph.ca.gov/FACEReports\)](#) for more information. The specific actions and conditions that led to the second incident are still under investigation.



The skylight that the worker fell through

As an immediate step to prevent future incidents among solar installers, all solar companies should have an employee safety program that includes a worksite assessment of electrical hazards from high voltage power lines and the risk of falls through skylights and roof openings. All workers should receive safety training prior to starting work, have daily “tailgate” briefings on job hazards, and receive adequate onsite supervision.

Guidance on working safely around skylights and electrical power lines can be found at:
[DHHS \(NIOSH\) Publication Number 2004-156 \(https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-156/\)](#)
[CDC \(NIOSH\) Electrical Safety \(https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/electrical/\)](#)
[Cal/OSHA Guide to Developing Your Workplace Injury and Illness Prevention Program \(http://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/iipp.html\)](#)