
S.O.P. #: TACTICAL OPERATIONS MANUAL #24

SUBJECT: HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRIC LINES

DIVISION: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Objective: To provide employees with guidance for operations involving high voltage electric lines. **Note: Sections 1 through 4 are legal provisions of the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Act.**

Section 1: Definition of “High Voltage Line” – A high voltage line is an electric line that is installed above ground level and has a voltage of more than 750 volts between conductors or from a conductor to ground.

Section 2: Presumption – Until determined otherwise from the owner or operator of an electric line that is above ground level shall be presumed:

- A. To be energized on and at all times after installation or erection
- B. To have a voltage of more than 750 volts

Section 3: Restrictions on activity within 10 feet of a high voltage line

- A. Moving all or any part of a building or other structure.
- B. Trimming a tree or doing any similar activity.
- C. Erecting, operating, storing, transporting, or otherwise handling any object, including:
 - 1. An antenna
 - 2. An antenna support
 - 3. Equipment
 - 4. A flagpole
 - 5. Machinery
 - 6. Material
 - 7. Tools
 - 8. Other apparatus

Section 4: Duty of the person performing an activity

- A. Whenever an activity listed in 3.C., above, is to be performed within 10 feet of a high voltage line, the person responsible for performing the activity shall:
 - 1. Promptly notify the owner or operator of the high voltage line of the activity to be performed.
 - 2. Make any appropriate arrangements with the owner or operator of the high voltage line to carry out any safety measures required by item 3 of this Section.
 - 3. With any necessary cooperation from and subject to any necessary agreement with the owner or operator of the high voltage line, ensure that the high voltage line has been effectively guarded against accidental contact by:
 - a. Installing physical barriers to prevent physical contact with the high voltage line
 - b. Relocating the high voltage line
 - c. De-energizing and grounding the high voltage line

Section 5: Guidelines for emergency operations that involve rescue or require immediate action for life saving measures where high voltage lines are present:

- A. Provide Fire Dispatch with the following information for relay to the Baltimore Gas & Electric Company:
 - 1. The exact location of the incident, including number of the pole carrying the high voltage electric line.
 - 2. The nature of the incident and the specific impact caused by the high voltage line.
 - 3. The Fire Department's intended actions.

- B. Assess scene safety
 - 1. Identify hazards to crews working on the ground.
 - 2. Identify hazards to aerial operations.
 - 3. Identify hazards to apparatus.

- C. Perform risk analysis of the incident
 - 1. Hazard to employees vs. successful rescue outcome.
 - 2. Identify and consider alternate rescue options.
 - 3. Only consider rescue of victims with immediate threat to life.
 - 4. Consider Baltimore Gas & Electric Company options
 - a. Estimated time of arrival for their representatives
 - b. De-energizing electrical grid for the area
 - 5. Designate a Safety Officer.