

# DON'T GET BURNED BY ARC FLASH INCIDENTS

## CONSIDER THE FACTS: Statistics surrounding Arc Flash and related injuries/fatalities

- **5 to 10 Arc Flash incidents** occur in electrical equipment every day in the United States. **At least 1 results in a fatality.**
  - CapSchell, Inc., 2007 (Chicago-based research and consulting firm, dedicated to preventing workplace injury)
- **Electrocution is the fifth (5th) leading cause of workplace fatalities** in the United States. Electrical Safety Foundation International reports that every 30 minutes during the work day, a worker suffers an electrically-induced injury that requires time off of the job for recovery. Over the last ten years, **more than 45,000 workers** have been injured from on-the-job electrical hazards.
  - Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS)
- **80% of electrical-related accidents** and fatalities involving “qualified workers” are **caused by Arc Flash or Arc Blast.** Between 2007 and 2011, more than 2,880 fines were assessed for not meeting OSHA regulation 1910.132(d), which averages out to 1.5 fines a day. **97%** of electricians have been shocked or injured on the job, due to contact with electrical current.
  - OSHA.gov
- Data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicates that **525 workers suffered fatal injuries** due to contact with electrical current from 2008-2010, which would represent 55% of the 961 injuries among all members of population due to exposure to electric current, radiation, high temperatures and pressures, reported by the National Safety Council during those years. BLS also reported **over 7000 non-fatal injuries** due to contact with electrical current, from 2008-2010.
  - Occupational Injuries from Electrical Shock, article, The Fire Protection Research Foundation, 2012
- **Electrical shock (48.8%) and Burns (19.3%)** are the most frequent types of injuries reported by worker’s compensation claims.
  - Lombardi & Co. (2009)
- Another critical factor pertaining to electrical injury is the substantial barriers to successful return to work. In addition to the physical limitations that affect job performance, the neurological effects may encompass behavioral changes, as well as memory and attention issues, irritability, anger and physical aggression. These have been noted in electrical injury victims with no prior history of mood disorders, creating evident strains on the work environment. Even low-voltage injuries can produce psychological and neurological impairments that adversely impact the ability to return to work.
  - Wesner & Hickie, 2013, Theman et al., 2008; Stergiou-Kita et al., 2014
- Because of the violent nature of arc flash exposure injuries, some are fatal. For those that are non-fatal, it’s common for the employee to **never regain their past quality of life.** Extended medical care is often needed and very costly. The average cost of treatment is upwards of \$1.5 million. **Total costs for the employer can be \$8 to \$10 million in litigation fees.**
  - Workplace Safety Awareness Council (WSAC)

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