



ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

TOOLBOX TALK SERIES – ELECTRICAL SAFETY

December 2025

Video Introduction

Today's safety topic begins with a short training video from **SafetyIO**:

Title: "OSHA Electrical Safety: How to Prevent Electrical Hazards"

Watch here: <https://youtu.be/TMT6f3tZQSk?si=1Dtv5v8HTKpBoli7>

This video highlights how to recognize electrical hazards in the workplace.

Purpose

Electrical hazards are present in nearly every Town department—Recreation and Parks, Public Works, and Town Hall Departments. Understanding how electricity behaves and how to work around it safely helps prevent shocks, burns, fires, and life-threatening injuries.

Key Hazards

- **Contact with live electrical parts** (exposed wires, damaged cords, open panels)
 - **Overloaded circuits** from plugging too many devices into a single outlet or power strip
 - **Improper use of extension cords** or using them as permanent wiring
 - **Wet or damp environments** increasing shock risk
 - **Equipment failure** caused by poor maintenance or aging infrastructure
 - **Accidental energizing** of systems during maintenance or repair
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Safe Work Practices

1. Inspect Before Use

- Check all power tools, cords, and outlets before each use.
- Look for cuts, frays, cracked insulation, or loose plugs.
- Remove damaged equipment from service immediately and tag it out.



2. Use GFCIs

- Use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters when working outdoors, in parks, near water sources, or in damp areas like the Community Center pool or DPW wash bays.
- GFCIs protect against deadly shocks by detecting imbalances in electrical flow.

3. Maintain Dry Conditions

- Keep cords and power tools away from puddles, wet grass, and standing water.
- Never handle electrical equipment with wet hands or soaked gloves.
- If working outside during rain, stop using electrical equipment immediately.

4. Avoid Improvised Wiring

- Never bypass or modify plugs, fuses, or breakers.
- Do not run extension cords through doorways, windows, or under rugs.
- Extension cords are **temporary only**—request proper outlets if needed.

5. Manage Cords Safely

- Position cords to avoid trip hazards.
- Use cord covers when running across walkways or work areas.
- Do not pull cords from the outlet—disconnect by grabbing the plug.

6. Lockout/Tagout (LOTO)

- Only trained personnel may perform LOTO.
- Follow Town procedures for shutting down electrical panels, HVAC systems, lift equipment, etc.
- Use your issued lock and tag—never share locks or work under someone else's lockout.

7. Stay Clear of Electrical Panels

- Maintain a minimum **36-inch clearance** around electrical panels and breaker boxes.
- Do not store carts, bins, or supplies in front of panels—Access must maintain at all times.

8. Report Hazards Immediately

- Burned outlets, flickering lights, warm electrical panels, and repeatedly tripped breakers all indicate a problem.
 - Report issues to your supervisor or department head.
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Examples in Town Operations

- **Parks Crew:** Using electric trimmers or chargers near water sources requires GFCI protection.
 - **Public Works:** Working with lift equipment, pumps, or shop tools demands proper inspection and dry conditions.
 - **Town Hall / Community Center Staff:** Avoid overloading power strips with space heaters, fans, and office equipment.
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What To Do in an Electrical Emergency

- **Do NOT touch a person who is being shocked.**
 - Shut off the power source if safe to do so.
 - Call **911** immediately and notify **Safety & Security**.
 - Keep others away from the hazard until Maintenance personnel or Fire personnel confirm the area is safe.
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Discussion Questions

1. Where do you encounter electrical hazards in your daily tasks?
 2. What signs of electrical damage have you seen around Town facilities?
 3. What steps can your team take to ensure cords and equipment remain in good condition?
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Key Takeaway

Electricity is unforgiving. A quick inspection, a dry work area, and attention to how equipment is powered can prevent serious injuries. When in doubt—**stop and report it.**

