

## Weekly Safety Tip

### SAFE IN A FLASH!



Arc Flash is a sudden release of electrical energy or fireball that is caused by a short circuit in electrical equipment. That fireball can release dangerous levels of thermal energy with temperatures over 35,000 degrees Fahrenheit. The rapid expansion of gases and temperatures, or pressure waves, during an arc-flash incident can send shrapnel, molten metal, tools, and other objects through the air at speeds over 700 mph. Add to that a sound pressure of 165dB (decibels) and an arc-flash incident can be the equivalent of a small explosion. Arc flash incidents can result in a loss of life, serious potential career ending injuries (including burns, loss of eyesight, and hearing that require extended recovery time), and extensive property damage.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) have cooperated to develop and publish important standards for arc flash safety. These safety standards require that areas of potential arc flash be identified with warning signs and labels that indicate the level of hazard. NFPA and IEEE also provide standards for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) that must be worn by workers for different levels of arc flash hazards. These standards demand a high level of training, knowledge about the work to be done, and how to complete it safely.

If you are not properly trained and don't have the credentials to perform work under arc flash conditions you must:

- **Stay Out!** Stay out of open electrical panels and don't try to do work you have not been trained to do.
- **Stay Away!** Avoid all areas and activities that have a potential for arc flash hazards.
- **Back Off!** Let the professionals who have been properly trained and have the correct tools and PPE do their job.

For more information on Arc Flash Safety, please visit:

[https://www.osha.gov/dte/grant\\_materials/fy07/sh-16615-07/arc\\_flash\\_handout.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/dte/grant_materials/fy07/sh-16615-07/arc_flash_handout.pdf)

**Stay Out! Stay Away! Back Off!**

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