

# Safety Overview

## Why You Need to Know

**S**afety is the job of each individual. You should be concerned not only with your own safety but also with the safety of others around you. This is especially true for persons employed in the electrical field. Some general rules should be followed when working with electric equipment or circuits.

## Outline

- S-1** General Safety Rules
- S-2** Effects of Electric Current on the Body
- S-3** On the Job
- S-4** Protective Clothing
- S-5** Ladders and Scaffolds
- S-6** Fires
- S-7** Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters
- S-8** Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs)
- S-9** Grounding

## Key Terms

Artificial respiration  
Cardiopulmonary  
resuscitation (CPR)  
Confined spaces  
De-energized circuit  
Disconnect  
Energized circuit  
Fibrillation  
Fire-retardant clothing  
Horseplay  
Idiot proofing  
Lockout and tagout  
Material safety data sheets  
(MSDS)  
Meter  
Milliamperes (mA)  
Occupational Safety and  
Health Administration  
(OSHA)  
Scaffolds

## Objectives

*After studying this unit, you should be able to*

- state basic safety rules.
- describe the effects of electric current on the body.
- discuss the origin and responsibilities of OSHA.
- discuss material safety data sheets.
- discuss lockout and tagout procedures.
- discuss types of protective clothing.
- explain how to properly place a straight ladder against a structure.
- discuss different types of scaffolds.
- discuss classes of fires.
- discuss ground-fault circuit interrupters.
- discuss the importance of grounding.

## S-1

## General Safety Rules

### Never Work on an Energized Circuit If the Power Can Be Disconnected

When possible, use the following three-step check to make certain that power is turned off:

1. Test the **meter** on a known live circuit to make sure the meter is operating.
2. Turn off the power and test the circuit that is to become the **de-energized circuit** with the meter.
3. Test the meter on the known live circuit again to make certain the meter is still operating.

Install a warning tag at the point of disconnection so people will not restore power to the circuit. If possible, use a lock to prevent anyone from turning the power back on.

### Think

Of all the rules concerning safety, this one is probably the most important. No amount of safeguarding or **idiot proofing** a piece of equipment can protect a person as well as taking time to think before acting. Many technicians have been killed by supposedly “dead” circuits. Do not depend on circuit breakers, fuses, or someone else to open a circuit. Test it yourself before you touch it. If you are working on high-voltage equipment, use insulated gloves and meter probes to measure the voltage being tested. *Think* before you touch something that could cost you your life.

### Avoid Horseplay

Jokes and **horseplay** have a time and place, but not when someone is working on an electric circuit or a piece of moving machinery. Do not be the cause of someone's being injured or killed, and do not let someone else be the cause of your being injured or killed.

## Do Not Work Alone

This is especially true when working in a hazardous location or on a live circuit. Have someone with you who can turn off the power or give **artificial respiration** and/or **cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)**. Several electric shocks can cause breathing difficulties and can cause the heart to go into fibrillation.

## Work with One Hand When Possible

The worst kind of electric shock occurs when the current path is from one hand to the other, which permits the current to pass directly through the heart. A person can survive a severe shock between the hand and foot that would cause death if the current path were from one hand to the other.

## Learn First Aid

Anyone working on electric equipment, especially those working with voltages greater than 50 volts, should make an effort to learn first aid. A knowledge of first aid, especially CPR, may save your own or someone else's life.

## Avoid Alcohol and Drugs

The use of alcohol and drugs has no place on a work site. Alcohol and drugs are not only dangerous to users and those who work around them; they also cost industry millions of dollars a year. Alcohol and drug abusers kill thousands of people on the highways each year and are just as dangerous on a work site as they are behind the wheel of a vehicle. Many industries have instituted testing policies to screen for alcohol and drugs. A person who tests positive may or may not receive a warning the first time, depending on the stringency of the company's drug and alcohol policy.

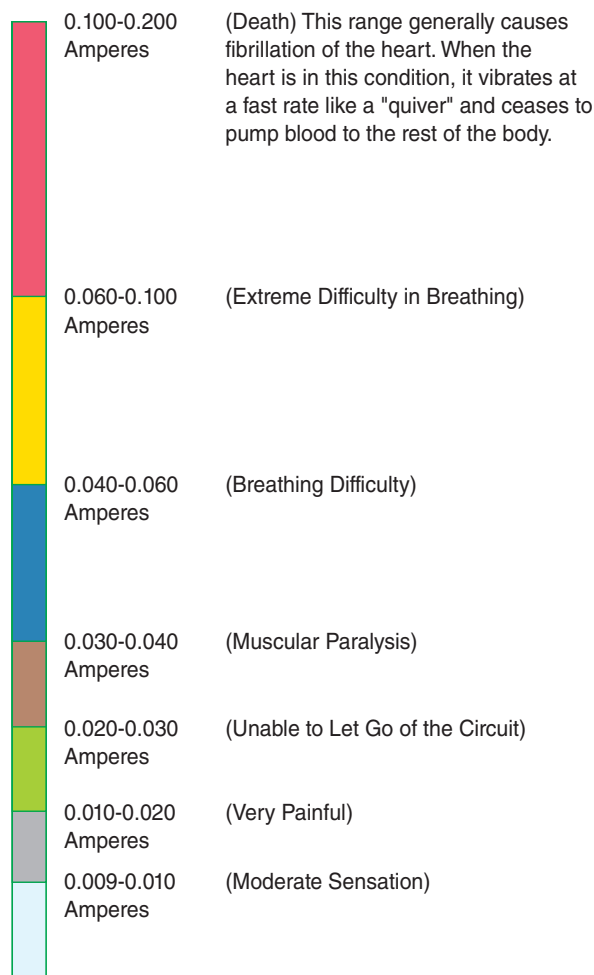
### S-2

## Effects of Electric Current on the Body

Most people have heard that it is not the voltage that kills but the current. This is true, but do not be misled into thinking that voltage cannot harm you. Voltage is the force that pushes the current through the circuit. It can be compared to the pressure that pushes water through a pipe. The more pressure available, the greater the volume of water flowing through the pipe. Students often ask how much current will flow through the body at a particular voltage. There is no easy answer to this question. The amount of current that can flow at a particular voltage is determined by the resistance of the current path. Different people have different resistances. A body has less resistance on a hot day when sweating, because salt water is a very good conductor. What one eats and drinks for lunch can have an effect on the body's resistance, as can the length of the current path. Is the current path between two hands or from one hand to one foot? All these factors affect body resistance.

Figure S-1 illustrates the effects of different amounts of current on the body. This chart is general—some people may have less tolerance to electricity and others may have a greater tolerance.

A current of 2 to 3 **milliamperes (mA)** (0.002 to 0.003 amperes) usually causes a slight tingling sensation, which increases as current increases and becomes very noticeable at about 10 milliamperes (0.010 amperes). The tingling sensation is very painful at about 20 milliamperes. Currents between 20 and 30 milliamperes cause a person to seize the line and be unable to let go of the circuit. Currents between 30 and 40 milliamperes cause muscular paralysis, and those between 40 and 60 milliamperes cause breathing difficulty. When the current increases to about 100 milliamperes, breathing is extremely difficult.



**FIGURE S-1** The effects of electric current on the body.

Currents from 100 to 200 milliamperes generally cause death because the heart usually goes into **fibrillation**, a condition in which the heart begins to “quiver” and the pumping action stops. Currents above 200 milliamperes cause the heart to squeeze shut. When the current is removed, the heart usually returns to a normal pumping action. This is the operating principle of a defibrillator. The voltage considered to be the most dangerous to work with is 120 volts, because that generally causes a current flow of between 100 and 200 milliamperes through most people’s bodies. Large amounts of current can cause severe electric burns that are often very serious because they occur on the inside of the body. The exterior of the body may not look seriously burned, but the inside may be severely burned.

### S-3

### On the Job

#### OSHA

OSHA is an acronym for **Occupational Safety and Health Administration**, U.S. Department of Labor. Created by congress in 1971, its mission is to ensure safe and healthful workplaces in the United States. Since its creation, workplace fatalities have been cut in half, and occupational injury and illness rates have declined by 40%. Enforcement of OSHA regulations is the responsibility of the Secretary of Labor.

OSHA standards cover many areas, such as the handling of hazardous materials, fall protection, protective clothing, and hearing and eye protection. Part 1910, Subpart S, deals mainly with the regulations concerning electrical safety. These regulations are available in books and can be accessed at the OSHA website on the Internet at <http://www.osha.org>.

## Hazardous Materials

It may become necessary to deal with some type of hazardous material. A hazardous material or substance is any substance to which exposure may result in adverse effects on the health or safety of employees. Hazardous materials may be chemical, biological, or nuclear. OSHA sets standards for dealing with many types of hazardous materials. The required response is determined by the type of hazard associated with the material. Hazardous materials are required to be listed as such. Much information concerning hazardous materials is generally found on **material safety data sheets (MSDS)**. (A sample MSDS is included at the end of the unit.) If you are working in an area that contains hazardous substances, always read any information concerning the handling of the material and any safety precautions that should be observed. After a problem exists is not the time to start looking for information on what to do.

Some hazardous materials require a hazardous materials (HAZMAT) response team to handle any problems. A HAZMAT team is any group of employees designated by the employer who are expected to handle and control an actual or potential leak or spill of a hazardous material. They are expected to work in close proximity to the material. A HAZMAT team is not always a fire brigade, and a fire brigade may not necessarily have a HAZMAT team. On the other hand, a HAZMAT team may be part of a fire brigade or fire department.

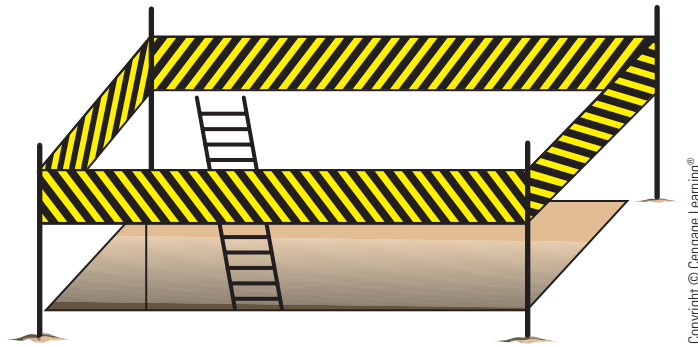
## Employer Responsibilities

Section 5(a)1 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act basically states that employers must furnish each of their employees a place of employment that is free of recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious injury. This places the responsibility for compliance on employers. Employers must identify hazards or potential hazards within the work site and eliminate them, control them, or provide employees with suitable protection from them. The employer is responsible for obtaining, maintaining, and posting (or making available) MSDS for all hazardous materials that may be used in the workplace. It is the employee's responsibility to read and understand the MSDS for all chemicals and materials that they may be exposed to in their working environment and to follow the safety procedures set up by the employer in the event of an accident. Employees should ask questions about any information or procedures they do not understand.

To help facilitate these safety standards and procedures, OSHA requires that an employer have a competent person oversee implementation and enforcement of these standards and procedures. This person must be able to recognize unsafe or dangerous conditions and have the authority to correct or eliminate them. This person also has the authority to stop work or shut down a work site until safety regulations are met.

## MSDS

MSDS stands for material safety data sheets, which are provided with many products. They generally warn users of any hazards associated with the product. They outline the physical and chemical properties of the product; list precautions that should be taken when using the product; and list any potential health hazards, storage consideration, flammability, reactivity, and, in some instances, radioactivity. They sometimes list the name, address, and telephone number of the manufacturer; the MSDS date and emergency telephone numbers; and, usually, information on first aid procedures to use if the product is



**FIGURE S-2** Place a barricade around a trench and use a ladder to enter and exit the trench.

swallowed or comes in contact with the skin. Safety data sheets can be found on many home products such as cleaning products, insecticides, and flammable liquids. A typical MSDS is shown in Table S-1 at the end of this unit.

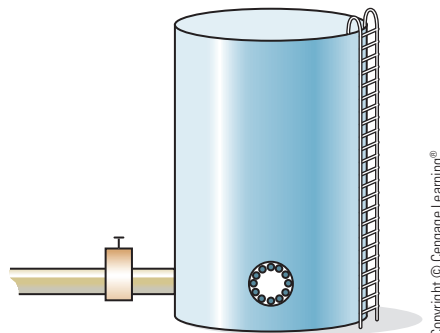
### Trenches

It is often necessary to dig trenches to bury conduit. Under some conditions, these trenches can be deep enough to bury a person if a cave-in should occur. Safety regulations for the shoring of trenches is found in OSHA Standard 1926, Subpart P, App C, titled “Timber Shoring for Trenches.” These procedures and regulations are federally mandated and must be followed. Some general safety rules also should be followed:

1. Do not walk close to trenches unless it is necessary. This can cause the dirt to loosen and increase the possibility of a cave-in.
2. Do not jump over trenches if it is possible to walk around them.
3. Place barricades around trenches (*Figure S-2*).
4. Use ladders to enter and exit trenches.

### Confined Spaces

**Confined spaces** have a limited means of entrance or exit (*Figure S-3*). They can be very hazardous workplaces, often containing atmospheres that are extremely harmful or deadly. Confined spaces are very difficult to ventilate because of their limited openings. It is often necessary for a worker to wear special clothing and use a separate air supply to work there. OSHA Section 12, “Confined Space Hazards,” lists rules and regulations for working in a confined space. In addition, many industries have written procedures that must be followed when working in confined spaces. Some general rules include the following:



**FIGURE S-3** A confined space is any space having a limited means of entrance or exit.

1. Have a person stationed outside the confined space to watch the person or persons working inside. The outside person should stay in voice or visual contact with the inside workers at all times. He or she should check air sample readings and monitor oxygen and explosive gas levels.
2. The outside person should never enter the space, even in an emergency, but should contact the proper emergency personnel. If he or she should enter the space and become incapacitated, there would be no one available to call for help.
3. Use only electric equipment and tools that are approved for the atmosphere found inside the confined area. It may be necessary to obtain a burning permit to operate tools that have open brushes and that spark when they are operated.
4. As a general rule, a person working in a confined space should wear a harness with a lanyard that extends to the outside person, so the outside person could pull him or her to safety if necessary.

### Lockout and Tagout Procedures

**Lockout and tagout** procedures are generally employed to prevent someone from energizing a piece of equipment by mistake. This could apply to switches, circuit breakers, or valves. Most industries have their own internal policies and procedures. Some require that a tag similar to the one shown in *Figure S-4* be placed on the piece of equipment being



**FIGURE S-4** Safety tag used to tagout equipment.



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**FIGURE S-5** The equipment can be locked out by several different people.

serviced; some also require that the equipment be locked out with a padlock. The person performing the work places the lock on the equipment and keeps the key in his or her possession. A device that permits the use of multiple padlocks and a safety tag is shown in *Figure S-5*. This is used when more than one person is working on the same piece of equipment. Violating lockout and tagout procedures is considered an extremely serious offense in most industries and often results in immediate termination of employment. As a general rule, there are no first-time warnings.

After locking out and tagging a piece of equipment, it should be tested to make certain that it is truly de-energized before working on it. A simple three-step procedure is generally recommended for making certain that a piece of electric equipment is de-energized. A voltage tester or voltmeter that has a high enough range to safely test the voltage is employed. The procedure is as follows:

1. Test the voltage tester or voltmeter on a known energized circuit to make certain the tester is working properly.
2. Test the circuit you intend to work on with the voltage tester or voltmeter to make sure that it is truly de-energized.
3. Test the voltage tester or voltmeter on a known energized circuit to make sure that the tester is still working properly.

This simple procedure helps to eliminate the possibility of a faulty piece of equipment indicating that a circuit is de-energized when it is not.

## S-4

## Protective Clothing

Maintenance and construction workers alike are usually required to wear certain articles of protective clothing, dictated by the environment of the work area and the job being performed.

### Head Protection

Some type of head protection is required on almost any work site. A typical electrician's hard hat, made of nonconductive plastic, is shown in *Figure S-6*. It has a pair of safety goggles attached that can be used when desired or necessary.



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**FIGURE S-6** Typical electrician's hard hat with attached safety goggles.

## Eye Protection

Eye protection is another piece of safety gear required on almost all work sites. Manufacturers require that eye protection, and sometimes hard hats, be worn by anyone, not just employees, entering the production area. Eye protection can come in different forms, ranging from the goggles shown in *Figure S-6* to the safety glasses with side shields shown in *Figure S-7*. Common safety glasses may or may not be prescription glasses, but almost all provide side protection (*Figure S-7*). Sometimes a full face shield may be required.

## Hearing Protection

Section III, Chapter 5, of the OSHA Technical Manual includes requirements concerning hearing protection. The need for hearing protection is based on the ambient sound level of the work site or the industrial location. Workers are usually required to wear some type of hearing protection when working in certain areas, usually in the form of earplugs or earmuffs.

## Fire-Retardant Clothing

Special clothing made of fire-retardant material is required to be worn by electricians, engineers, and any personnel who may be exposed to an arc flash. **Fire-retardant clothing**



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**FIGURE S-7** Safety glasses provide side protection.



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**FIGURE S-8** Leather gloves with rubber inserts.



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**FIGURE S-9** Kevlar gloves protect against cuts.

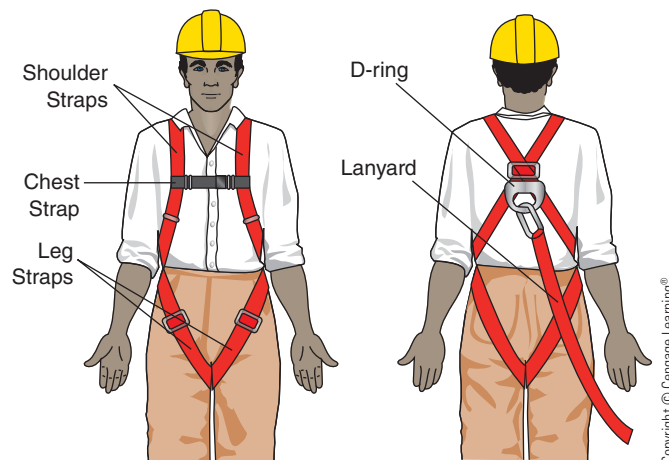
is often required for maintenance personnel who work with high-power sources such as transformer installations and motor-control centers. An arc flash in a motor-control center can easily catch a person's clothes on fire. The typical motor-control center can produce enough energy during an arc flash to kill a person 30 feet away.

## Gloves

Another common article of safety clothing is gloves. Electricians often wear leather gloves with rubber inserts when it is necessary to work on energized circuits (*Figure S-8*). These gloves are usually rated for a certain amount of voltage. They should be inspected for holes or tears before they are used. Kevlar gloves (*Figure S-9*) help protect against cuts when stripping cable with a sharp blade.

## Safety Harness

Safety harnesses provide protection from falling. They buckle around the upper body with leg, shoulder, and chest straps; and the back has a heavy metal D-ring (*Figure S-10*). A



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**FIGURE S-10** Typical safety harness.



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**FIGURE S-11** Safety harness.

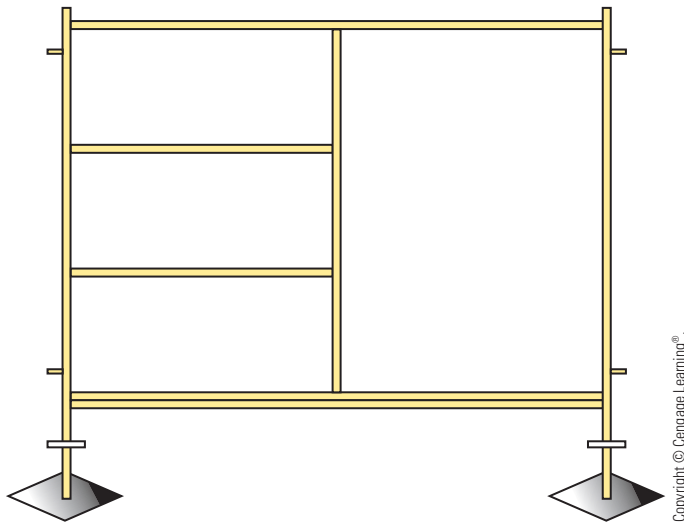
section of rope approximately 6 feet in length, called a lanyard, is attached to the D-ring and secured to a stable structure above the worker. If the worker falls, the lanyard limits the distance he or she can drop. A safety harness should be worn:

1. When working more than 6 feet above the ground or floor
2. When working near a hole or drop-off
3. When working on high scaffolding

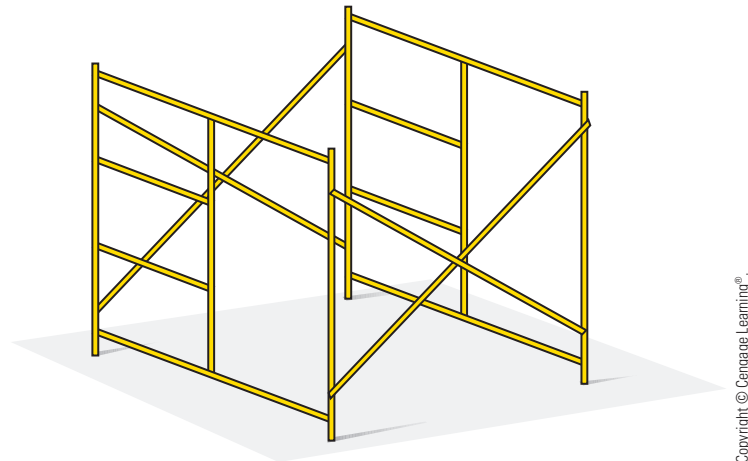
A safety harness is shown in *Figure S-11*.

## **S-5** Ladders and Scaffolds

It is often necessary to work in an elevated location. When this is the case, ladders or scaffolds are employed. **Scaffolds** generally provide the safest elevated working platforms. They are commonly assembled on the work site from standard sections (*Figure S-12*). The bottom sections usually contain adjustable feet that can be used to level the sections. Two end sections are connected by X braces that form a rigid work platform (*Figure S-13*). Sections of scaffolding are stacked on top of each other to reach the desired height.



**FIGURE S-12** Typical section of scaffolding.



**FIGURE S-13** X braces connect scaffolding sections together.

### Rolling Scaffolds

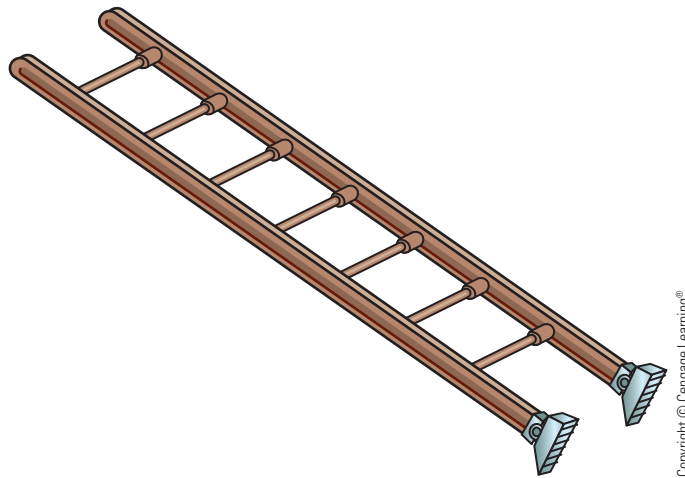
Rolling scaffolds are used in areas that contain level floors, such as inside a building. The major difference between a rolling scaffold and those discussed previously is that it is equipped with wheels on the bottom section that permit it to be moved from one position to another. The wheels usually contain a mechanism that permits them to be locked after the scaffold is rolled to the desired location.

### Hanging or Suspended Scaffolds

Hanging or suspended scaffolds are suspended by cables from a support structure. They are generally used on the sides of buildings to raise and lower workers by using hand cranks or electric motors.

### Straight Ladders

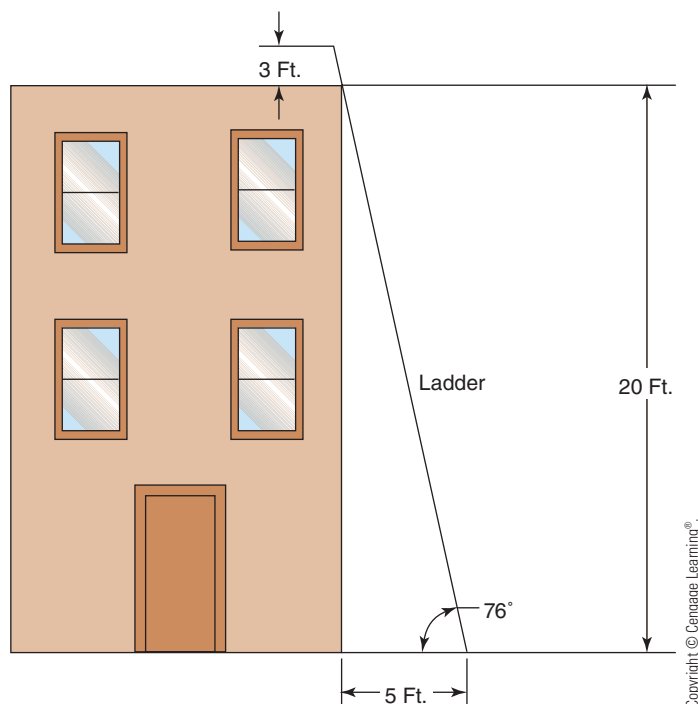
Ladders can be divided into two main types, straight and step. Straight ladders are constructed by placing rungs between two parallel rails (*Figure S-14*). They generally contain



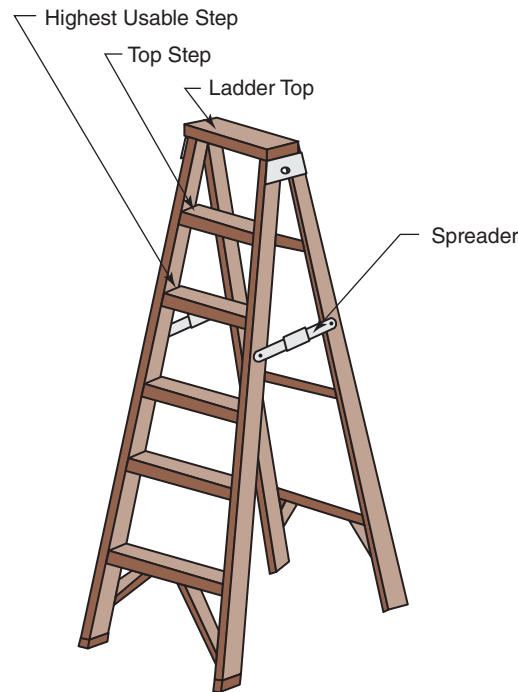
**FIGURE S-14** Straight ladder.

safety feet on one end that help prevent the ladder from slipping. Ladders used for electrical work are usually wood or fiberglass; aluminum ladders are avoided because they conduct electricity. Regardless of the type of ladder used, you should check its load capacity before using it. This information is found on the side of the ladder. Load capacities of 200 pounds, 250 pounds, and 300 pounds are common. Do not use a ladder that does not have enough load capacity to support your weight plus the weight of your tools and the weight of any object you are taking up the ladder with you.

Straight ladders should be placed against the side of a building or other structure at an angle of approximately  $76^\circ$  (Figure S-15). This can be accomplished by moving the base of the ladder away from the structure a distance equal to one-fourth the height of the ladder. If the ladder is 20 feet high, it should be placed 5 feet from the base of the structure. If the ladder is to provide access to the top of the structure, it should extend 3 feet above the structure.



**FIGURE S-15** A ladder should be placed at an angle of approximately  $76^\circ$ .



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**FIGURE S-16** Typical step ladder.

## Step Ladders

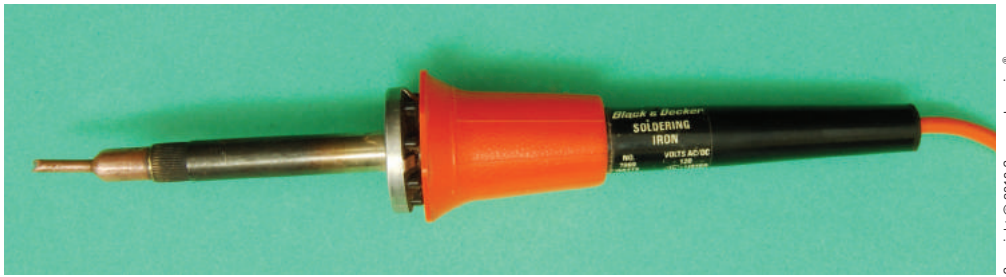
Step ladders are self-supporting, constructed of two sections hinged at the top (*Figure S-16*). The front section has two rails and steps, the rear portion two rails and braces. Like straight ladders, step ladders are designed to withstand a certain load capacity. Always check the load capacity before using a ladder. As a general rule, ladder manufacturers recommend that the top step not be used because of the danger of becoming unbalanced and falling. Many people mistakenly think the top step is the top of the ladder, but it is actually the last step before the ladder top.

## S-6 Fires

For a fire to burn, it must have three things: fuel, heat, and oxygen. Fuel is anything that can burn, including materials such as wood, paper, cloth, combustible dusts, and even some metals. Different materials require different amounts of heat for combustion to take place. If the temperature of any material is below its combustion temperature, it will not burn. Oxygen must be present for combustion to take place. If a fire is denied oxygen, it will extinguish.

Fires are divided into four classes: A, B, C, and D. Class A fires involve common combustible materials such as wood or paper. They are often extinguished by lowering the temperature of the fuel below the combustion temperature. Class A fire extinguishers often use water to extinguish a fire. A fire extinguisher listed as Class A only should never be used on an electrical fire.

Class B fires involve fuels such as grease, combustible liquids, or gases. A Class B fire extinguisher generally employs carbon dioxide ( $\text{CO}_2$ ), which greatly lowers the temperature of the fuel and deprives the fire of oxygen. Carbon dioxide extinguishers are often used on electrical fires, because they do not destroy surrounding equipment by coating it with a dry powder.



**FIGURE S-17** Typical soldering iron used to connect electronic components.

Class C fires involve energized electric equipment. A Class C fire extinguisher usually uses a dry powder to smother the fire. Many fire extinguishers can be used on multiple types of fires; for example, an extinguisher labeled ABC could be used on any of the three classes of fire. The important thing to remember is never to use an extinguisher on a fire for which it is not rated. Using a Class A extinguisher filled with water on an electrical fire could be fatal.

Class D fires consist of burning metal. Spraying water on some burning metals can actually cause the fire to increase. Class D extinguishers place a powder on top of the burning metal that forms a crust to cut off the oxygen supply to the metal. Some metals cannot be extinguished by placing powder on them, in which case the powder should be used to help prevent the fire from spreading to other combustible materials.

Probably the single greatest cause of electrical fires is poor or loose connections. Poor connections create resistance, and resistance causes heat. Electricity is a form of pure energy. The electrical unit of watts measures the amount of electrical energy converted into some other form. When resistance is present, electrical energy is converted into thermal energy or heat. The typical soldering irons used for connecting electronic components generally range from 15 to 30 watts (*Figure S-17*). Even a small amount of resistance can cause an extreme amount of heat in a high current load. Assume that a connection has developed 0.25 ohm of resistance in a circuit with a current draw of 25 amperes. The heat dissipated at the connection can be determined using Ohm's law:

$$P = I^2R$$

$$P = 25 \times 25 \times 0.25$$

$$P = 156.25 \text{ watts}$$

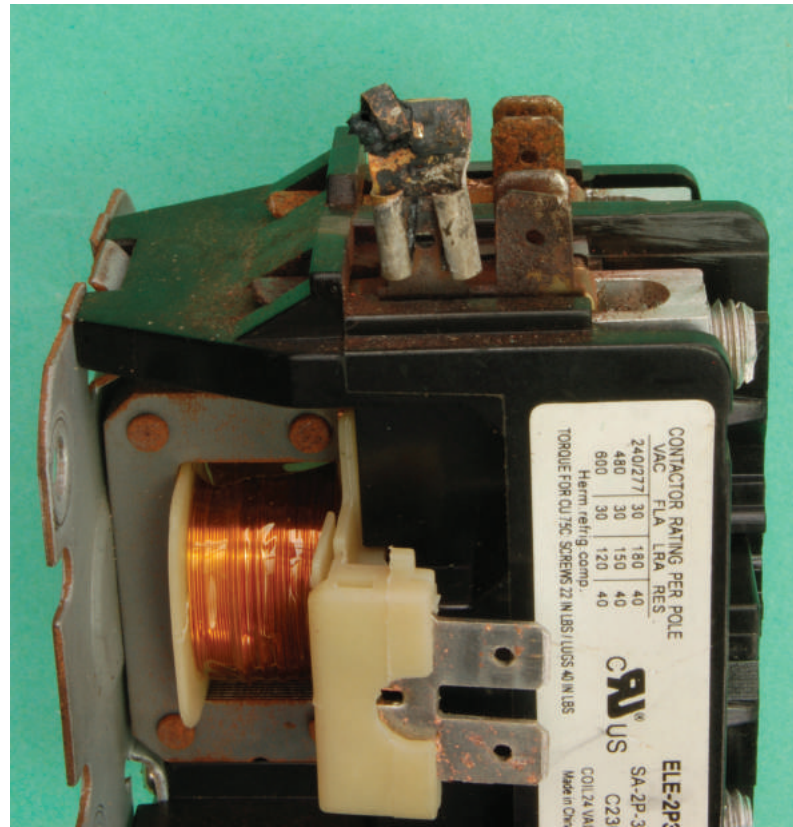
This amount of heat can start a fire in many different types of combustible materials.

Once a poor connection begins overheating, it causes the metal of the connector and terminal to oxidize and develop even more resistance, causing more damage. The result of a poor connection at a terminal is shown in *Figure S-18*. The conductor connected to the terminal eventually melted and was burned off (*Figure S-19*).

## S-7

## Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters

Ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) are used to prevent people from being electrocuted. They work by sensing the amount of current flow on both the ungrounded (hot) and grounded (neutral) conductors supplying power to a device. In theory, the amount of current in both conductors should be equal but opposite in polarity



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**FIGURE S-18** Burned terminal and connection caused by a poor connection.

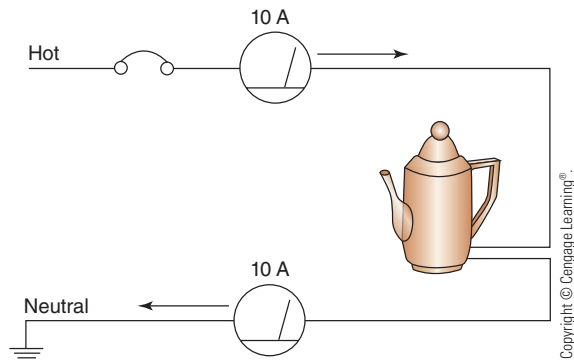


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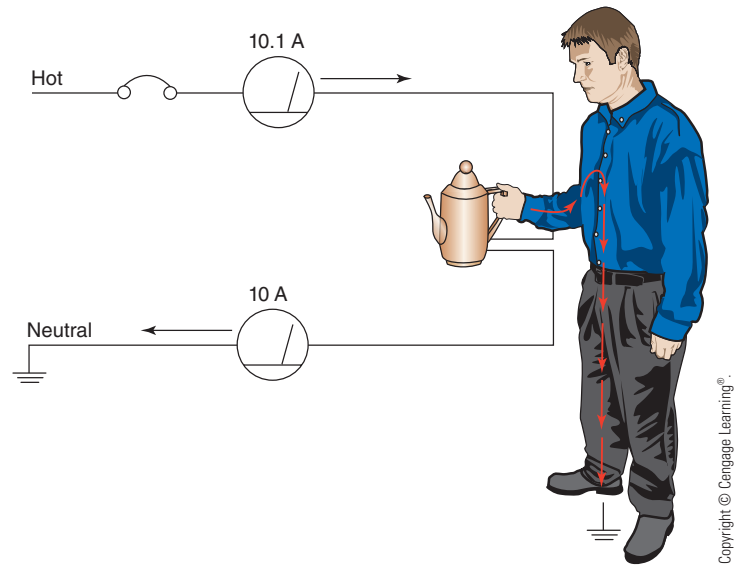
**FIGURE S-19** Burned wire caused by a poor connection.

(Figure S-20). In this example, a current of 10 amperes flows in both the hot and neutral conductors.

A ground fault occurs when a path to ground other than the intended path is established (Figure S-21). Assume that a person comes in contact with a defective electric appliance. If the person is grounded, a current path can be established through the person's body. In the example shown in Figure S-21, it is assumed that a current of 0.1 ampere is flowing through the person. This means that the hot conductor now has a current of 10.1 amperes, but the neutral conductor has a current of only 10 amperes. The GFCI is designed to detect this current difference to protect personnel by opening the circuit when it detects a current difference of approximately 5 milliamperes (0.005 ampere). The *National Electrical Code*® (NEC®) 210.8 lists places where ground-fault protection is required in dwellings. The *National Electrical Code* and NEC are registered trademarks of the National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA.



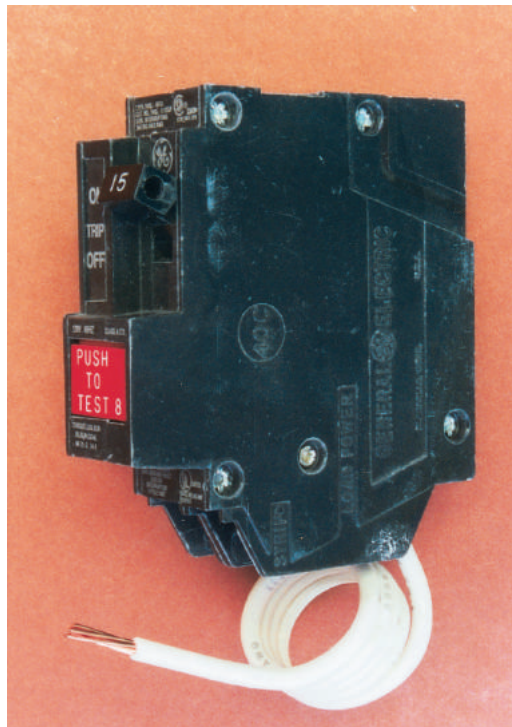
**FIGURE S-20** The current in both the “hot” and neutral conductors should be the same, but flowing in opposite directions.



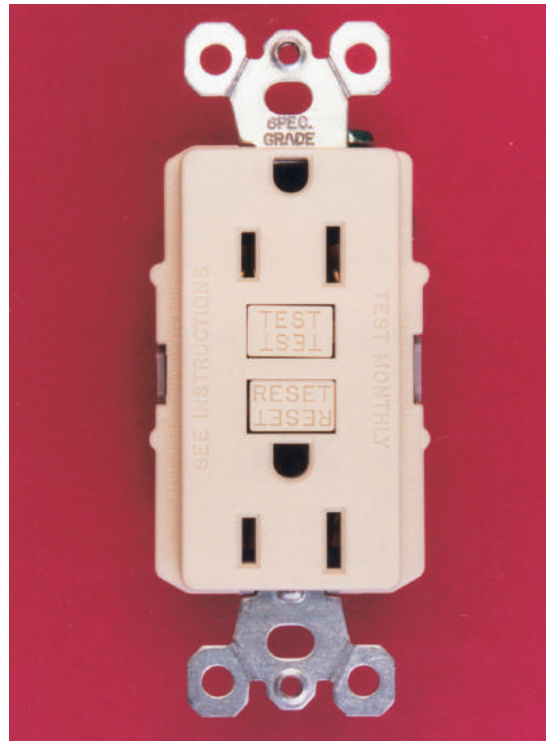
**FIGURE S-21** A ground fault occurs when a path to ground other than the intended path is established.

## GFCI Devices

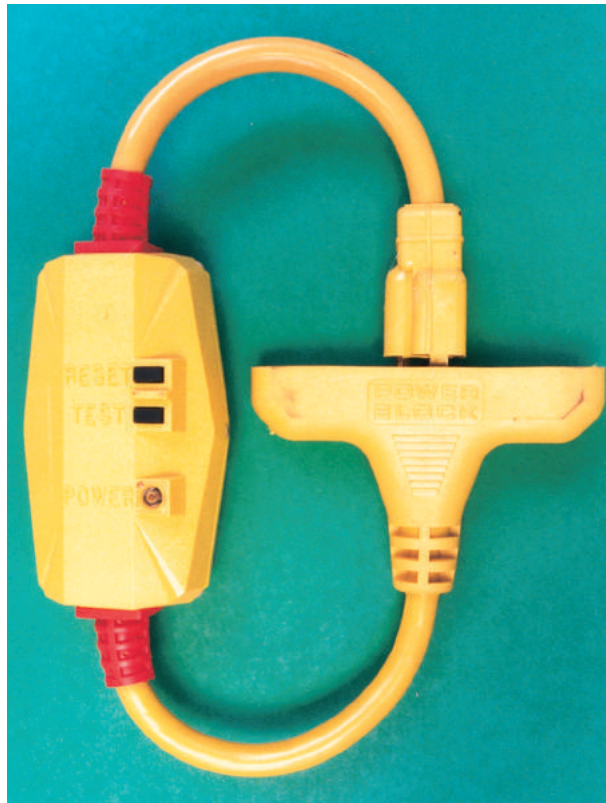
Several devices can be used to provide ground-fault protection, including the ground-fault circuit breaker (Figure S-22). The circuit breaker provides ground-fault protection for an entire circuit, so any device connected to the circuit is ground-fault protected. A second method of protection, ground-fault receptacles (Figure S-23), provide protection at the point of attachment. They have some advantages over the GFCI circuit breaker. They can be connected so that they protect only the devices connected to them and do not protect any other outlets



**FIGURE S-22** Ground-fault circuit breaker.



**FIGURE S-23** Ground-fault receptacle.



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**FIGURE S-24** Ground-fault extension.

on the same circuit, or they can be connected so they provide protection to other outlets. Another advantage is that, because they are located at the point of attachment for the device, there is no stray capacitance loss between the panel box and the equipment being protected. Long wire runs often cause nuisance tripping of GFCI circuit breakers. A third ground-fault protective device is the GFCI extension cord (*Figure S-24*). It can be connected into any standard electric outlet, and any devices connected to it are then ground-fault protected.

## S-8

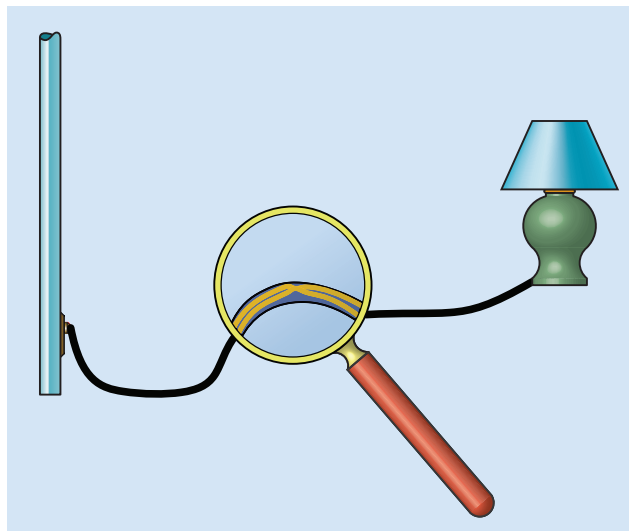
### Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs)

Arc-fault circuit interrupters are similar to ground fault circuit interrupters in that they are designed to protect people from a particular hazard. Where the ground fault interrupter is designed to protect against electrocution, the arc-fault interrupter is intended to protect against fire. Studies have shown that one-third of electrical related fires are caused by an arc-fault condition. At present, the *National Electrical Code* requires that arc-fault circuit interrupters be used on all 120-volt, single-phase, 15- and 20-ampere circuits installed in dwelling units supplying power to family rooms, dining rooms, living rooms, parlors, libraries, dens, bedrooms, sunrooms, recreation rooms, closets, hallways, or similar rooms or areas.

An arc-fault is a plasma flame that can develop temperatures in excess of 6000°C (10,832°F). Arc faults occur when an intermittent gap between two conductors or a conductor and ground permits current to “jump” between the two conductive surfaces. There are two basic types of arc faults, the parallel and the series.

#### Parallel Arc Faults

Parallel arc faults are caused by two conductors becoming shorted together (*Figure S-25*). A prime example of this is when the insulation of a lamp cord or extension cord has



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**FIGURE S-25** Parallel arc faults are caused by two conductors touching.

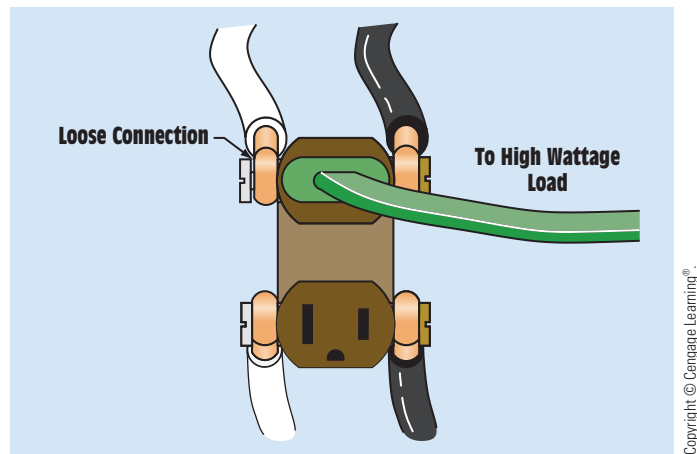
become damaged and permits the two conductors to short together. The current in this type of fault is limited by the resistance of the conductors in the circuit **and not by the load**. The current in this type of fault is generally much higher than the rated current of a typical thermomagnetic circuit breaker. A continuous short will usually cause the circuit breaker to trip almost immediately because it will activate the magnetic part of the circuit breaker, but an intermittent short may take some time to heat the thermal part of the circuit breaker enough to cause it to trip open. Thermal/magnetic type circuit breakers are generally effective in protecting against this type of arc fault, but cords with small-size conductors, such as lamp and small extension cords, can add enough resistance to the circuit to permit the condition to exist long enough to produce sufficient heat to start a fire.

Parallel arc faults can be more hazardous than series arc faults because they generate a greater amount of heat. Arc faults of this type often cause hot metal to be ejected into combustible material. Parallel arc faults, however, generally produce peak currents that are well above the normal current rating of a circuit breaker. This permits the electronic circuits in the arc-fault circuit interrupter to detect them very quickly and trip the breaker in a fraction of a second.

## Series Arc Faults

Series arc faults are generally caused by loose connections. A loose screw on an outlet terminal, or an improperly made wire nut connection, is a prime example of this type of problem. They are called series arc faults because the circuit contains some type of current-limiting resistance connected in series with the arc (*Figure S-26*). Although the amount of electrical energy converted into heat is less than that of a parallel arc fault, series arc faults can be more dangerous. The fact that the current is limited by some type of load keeps the current below the thermal and magnetic trip rating of a common thermo/magnetic circuit breaker. Because the peak arc current is never greater than the normal steady current flow, series arcing is more difficult to detect than parallel arcing.

When the current of an arc remains below the normal range of a common thermomagnetic circuit breaker, it cannot provide protection. If a hair dryer, for example, normally has a current draw of 12 amperes, but the wall outlet has a loose screw at one terminal so that the circuit makes connection only half of the time, the average circuit current is 6 amperes. This is well below the trip rating of a common circuit breaker. A 6-ampere arc, however, can produce a tremendous amount of heat in a small area.



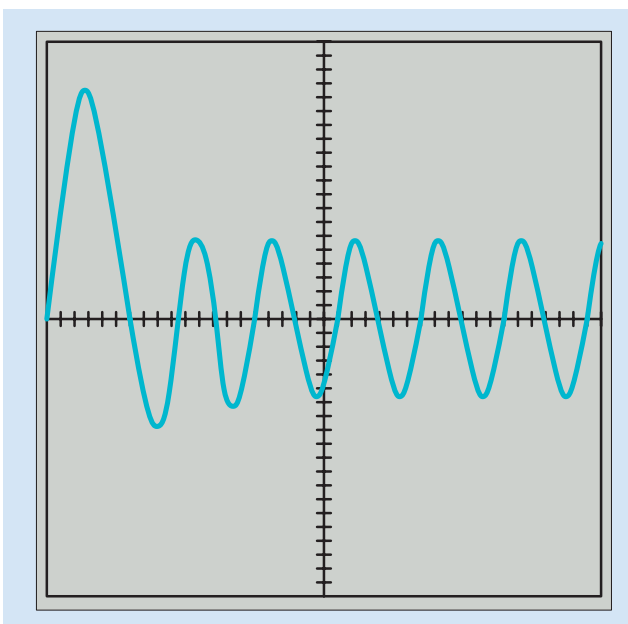
**FIGURE S-26** Series arc-faults are generally caused by bad connections.

### Arc-Fault Detection

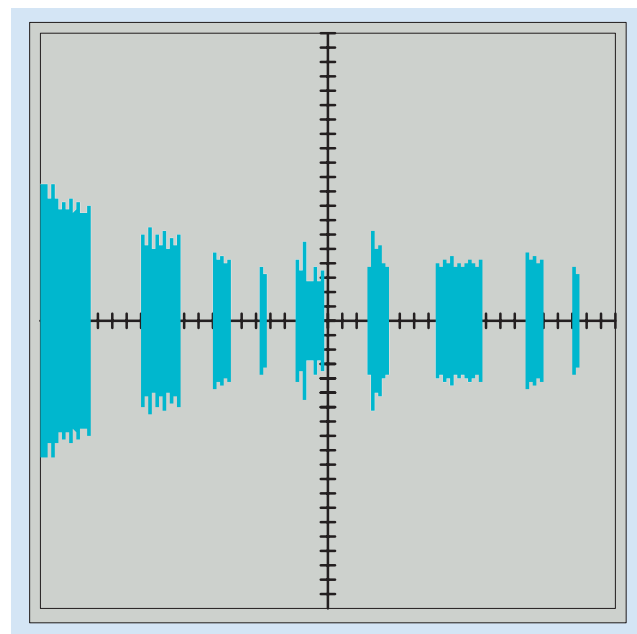
There are conditions where arcing in an electric circuit is normal, such as these:

- Turning a light switch on or off
- Switching on or off of a motor relay
- Plugging in an appliance that is already turned on
- Changing a light bulb with the power turned on
- Arcing caused by motors that contain a commutator and brushes

The arc-fault circuit interrupter is designed to be able to distinguish between normally occurring arcs and an arc fault. An arc caused by a toggle switch being used to turn a light on or off will produce a current spike of short duration, as shown in *Figure S-27*. An arc fault, however, is an intermittent connection and will generally produce current spikes of various magnitudes and lengths of time (*Figure S-28*).



**FIGURE S-27** Current spike produced by turning a light on or off.



**FIGURE S-28** Waveform produced by typical arc fault.

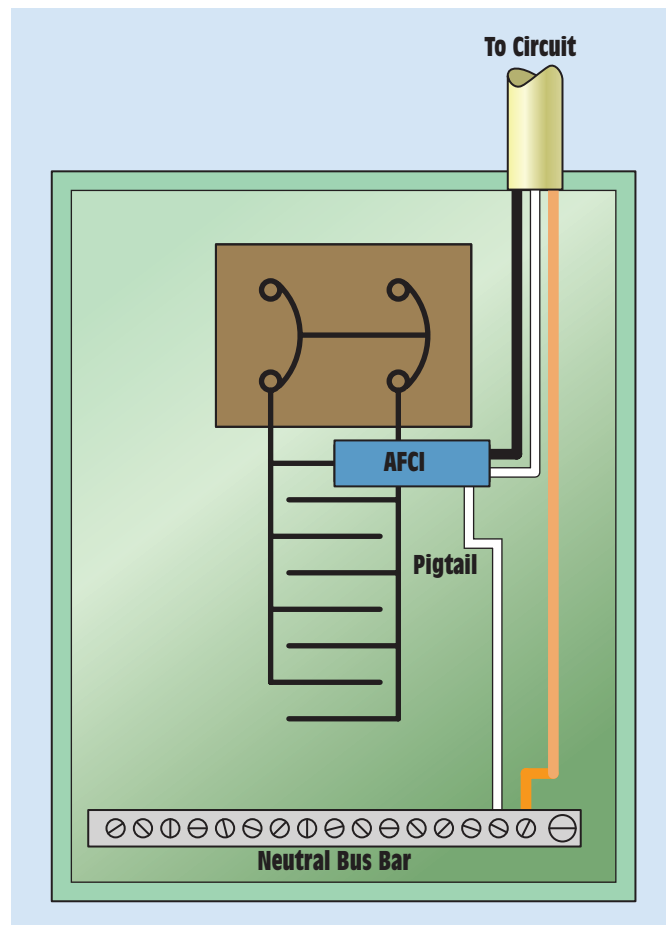
In order for an arc-fault circuit interrupter to determine the difference between a normally occurring arc and an arc fault, a microprocessor and other related electronic components are employed to detect these differences. The AFCI contains current and temperature sensors as well as a microprocessor and nonvolatile (retains its information when power is switched off) memory. The current and temperature sensors permit the AFCI to operate as a normal circuit breaker in the event of a circuit overload or short circuit. The microprocessor continuously monitors the current and compares the waveform to information stored in the memory. The microprocessor is monitoring the current for the magnitude, duration, and length of time between pulses, not for a particular waveform. For this reason, there are some appliances that can produce waveforms similar to that of an arc fault and may cause the AFCI to trip. Appliances containing motors that employ the use of brushes and a commutator, such as vacuum cleaners and hand drills, will produce a similar waveform.

### Connecting an Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupter

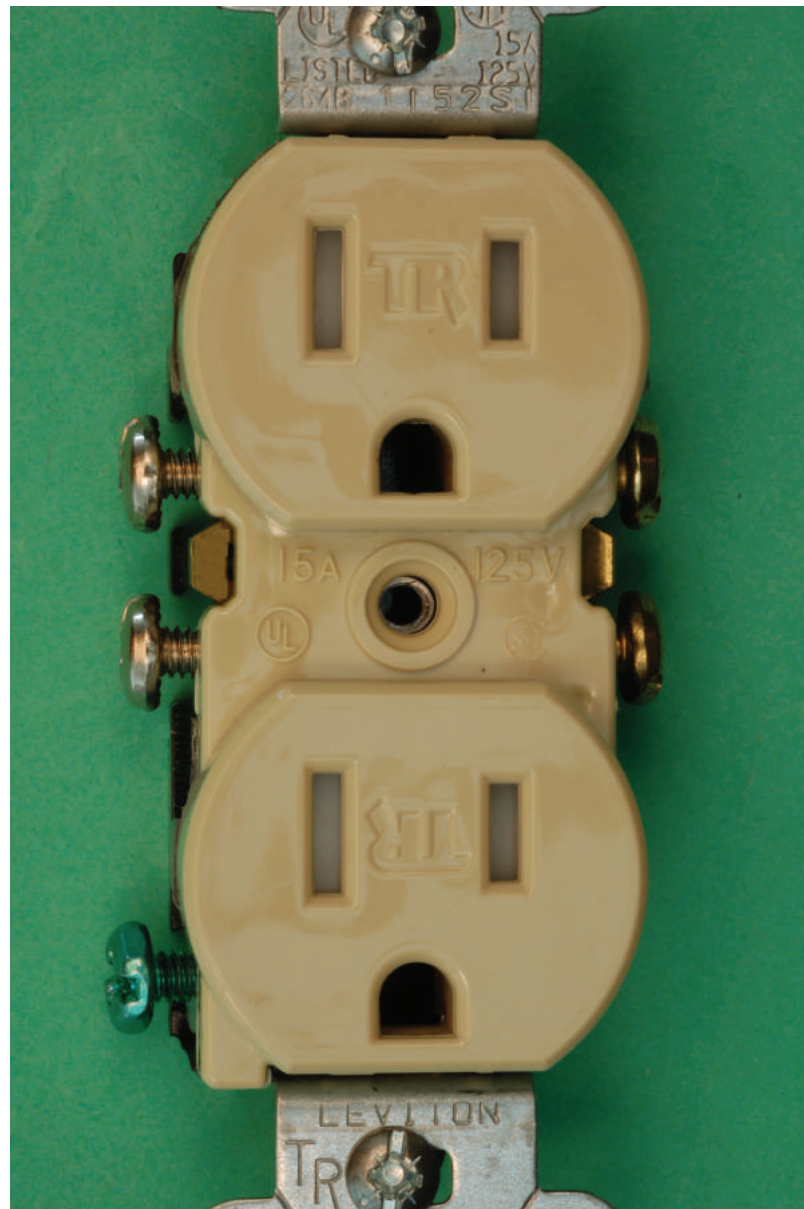
The AFCI is connected in the same manner as a ground fault circuit breaker. The AFCI contains a white pigtail (Figure S-29) that is connected to the neutral bus bar in the panel box. Both the neutral and hot or ungrounded conductors of the branch circuit are connected to the arc-fault circuit breaker. The circuit breaker contains a silver-colored and a brass-colored screw. The neutral or white wire of the branch circuit is inserted under the silver screw, and the black wire is inserted under the brass screw (Figure S-30). A rocker



**FIGURE S-29** Arc-fault circuit breaker.



**FIGURE S-30** The arc-fault interrupter connects in the same manner as a ground-fault interrupter.



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**FIGURE S-31** Tamper-resistant receptacle.

switch located on the front of the AFCI permits the breaker to be tested for both short and arc condition. In addition to the manual test switch, the microprocessor performs a self-test about once every 10 minutes.

### Tamper-Resistant Receptacles

Tamper-resistant receptacles contain a plastic mechanism that covers the outlet openings (*Figure S-31*). The covering will retract and permit entry only when a device with two blades, such as a male plug, is inserted. The covering will not retract if an object is pressed into only one opening. Tamper-resistant receptacles are used in areas where small children are present, such as day care facilities, a child's play room, and nurseries.

**S-9****Grounding**

Grounding is one the most important safety considerations in the electrical field. Grounding provides a low resistance path to ground to prevent conductive objects from existing at a high potential. Many electric appliances are provided with a three-wire cord. The third prong is connected to the case of the appliance and forces the case to exist at ground potential. If an ungrounded conductor comes in contact with the case, the grounding conductors conduct the current directly to ground. The third prong on a plug should never be cut off or defeated. Grounding requirements are far too numerous to list in this chapter, but *NEC 250* covers the requirements for the grounding of electrical systems.

**SUMMARY**

- Never work on an **energized circuit** if the power can be **disconnected**.
- The most important rule of safety is to think.
- Avoid horseplay.
- Do not work alone.
- Work with one hand when possible.
- Learn first aid and CPR.
- A current of 100 to 200 milliamperes passing through the heart generally causes death.
- The mission of OSHA is to ensure safe and healthy workplaces in the United States.
- Avoid using alcohol and drugs in the workplace.
- Do not walk close to trenches unless it is necessary.
- Do not jump over trenches if it is possible to walk around them.
- Place barricades around trenches.
- Use ladders to enter and exit trenches.
- When working in confined spaces, an outside person should keep in constant contact with people inside the space.
- Lockout and tagout procedures are used to prevent someone from energizing a circuit by mistake.
- Scaffolds generally provide the safest elevated working platforms.
- The bottom of a straight ladder should be placed at a distance from the wall that is equal to one fourth the height of the ladder.
- Fires can be divided into four classes: Class A is common items such as wood and paper; Class B is grease, liquids, and gases; Class C is energized electric equipment; and Class D is metals.
- Ground-fault circuit interrupters are used to protect people from electric shock.
- GFCI protectors open the circuit when approximately 5 milliamperes of ground-fault current are sensed.

- Arc-fault interrupters protect against electrical fires by sensing an arc-fault condition. Arc-fault circuit interrupters employ a microprocessor to sense an arc-fault condition.
- NEC 250 lists requirements for grounding electrical systems.
- Poor connections are one the leading causes of electrical fires.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the most important rule of electrical safety?
2. Why should a person work with only one hand when possible?
3. What range of electric current generally causes death?
4. What is fibrillation of the heart?
5. What is the operating principle of a defibrillator?
6. Who is responsible for enforcing OSHA regulations?
7. What is the mission of OSHA?
8. What is an MSDS?
9. A padlock is used to lock out a piece of equipment. Who should have the key?
10. A ladder is used to reach the top of a building 16 feet tall. What distance should the bottom of the ladder be placed from the side of the building?
11. What is a ground fault?
12. What is the approximate current at which a ground-fault detector will open the circuit?
13. Name three devices used to provide ground-fault protection.
14. What type of fire is Class B?
15. What section of the NEC covers grounding?

Section 1	Identity of Material
Trade Name	OATEY HEAVY DUTY CLEAR LO-VOC PVC CEMENT
Product Numbers	31850, 31851, 31853, 31854
Formula	PVC Resin in Solvent Solution
Synonyms	PVC Plastic Pipe Cement
Firm Name & Mailing Address	OATEY CO., 4700 West 160th Street, P.O. Box 35906 Cleveland, Ohio 44135, U.S.A. <a href="http://www.oatey.com">http://www.oatey.com</a>
Oatey Phone Number	1-216-267-7100
Emergency Phone Numbers	For Emergency First Aid call 1-303-623-5716 COLLECT. For chemical transportation emergencies ONLY, call Chemtrec at 1-800-424-9300
Prepared By	Charles N. Bush, Ph.D.

**TABLE S-1** Heavy Duty Clear LO-VOC PVC Cement

Section 2		Hazardous Ingredients			
Ingredients	%	Cas Number		Sec 313	
Acetone	0–5%	67-64-1		No	
Amorphous Fumed Silica (Nonhazardous)	1–3%	112945-52-5		No	
Proprietary (Nonhazardous)	5–15%	N/A		No	
PVC Resin (Nonhazardous)	10–16%	9002-86-2		No	
Cyclohexanone	5–15%	108-94-1		No	
Tetrahydrofuran (See SECTION 11)	30–50%	109-99-9		No	
Methyl Ethyl Ketone	20–35%	78-93-3		Yes	
Section 3		Known Hazards Under U.S. 29 CFR 1910.1200			
Hazards	Yes	No	Hazards	Yes	No
Combustible Liquid		x	Skin Hazard	x	
Flammable Liquid	x		Eye Hazard	x	
Pyrophoric Material		x	Toxic Agent	x	
Explosive Material		x	Highly Toxic Agent		x
Unstable Material		x	Sensitizer		x
Water Reactive Material		x	Kidney Toxin	x	
Oxidizer		x	Reproductive Toxin	x	
Organic Peroxide		x	Blood Toxin		x
Corrosive Material		x	Nervous System Toxin	x	
Compressed Gas		x	Lung Toxin	x	
Irritant	x		Liver Toxin	x	
Carcinogen NTP/IARC/ OSHA (see SECTION 11)		x			
Section 4		Emergency and First Aid Procedures—Call 1-303-623-5716 Collect			
Skin	If irritation arises, wash thoroughly with soap and water. Seek medical attention if irritation persists. Remove dried cement with Oatey Plumber’s Hand Cleaner or baby oil.				
Eyes	If material gets into eyes or if fumes cause irritation, immediately flush eyes with water for 15 minutes. If irritation persists, seek medical attention.				
Inhalation	Move to fresh air. If breathing is difficult, give oxygen. If not breathing, give artificial respiration. Keep victim quiet and warm. Call a poison control center or physician immediately. If respiratory irritation occurs and does not go away, seek medical attention.				

TABLE S-1 Continues

Ingestion	<b>DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING.</b> This product may be aspirated into the lungs and cause chemical pneumonitis, a potentially fatal condition. Drink water and call a poison control center or physician immediately. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Never give anything by mouth to an unconscious person.			
<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Fire Fighting Measures</b>			
Precautions	Do not use or store near heat, sparks, or flames. Do not smoke when using. Vapors may accumulate in low places and may cause flash fires.			
Special Fire Fighting Procedures	<b>FOR SMALL FIRES:</b> Use dry chemical, CO <sub>2</sub> , water or foam extinguisher. <b>FOR LARGE FIRES:</b> Evacuate area and call Fire Department immediately.			
<b>Section 6</b>	<b>Accidental Release Measures</b>			
Spill or Leak Procedures	Remove all sources of ignition and ventilate area. Stop leak if it can be done without risk. Personnel cleaning up the spill should wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including respirators if vapor concentrations are high. Soak up spill with absorbent material such as sand, earth or other noncombusting material. Put absorbent material in covered, labeled metal containers. Contaminated absorbent material may pose the same hazards as the spilled product. See Section 13 for disposal information.			
<b>Section 7</b>	<b>Handling and Storage</b>			
Precautions	<b>HANDLING &amp; STORAGE:</b> Keep away from heat, sparks and flames; store in cool, dry place. <b>OTHER:</b> Containers, even empties, will retain residue and flammable vapors.			
<b>Section 8</b>	<b>Exposure Controls/Personal Protection</b>			
Protective Equipment Types	<b>EYES:</b> Safety glasses with side shields. <b>RESPIRATORY:</b> NIOSH-approved canister respirator in absence of adequate ventilation. <b>GLOVES:</b> Rubber gloves are suitable for normal use of the product. For long exposures to pure solvents, chemical-resistant gloves may be required. <b>OTHER:</b> Eye wash and safety shower should be available.			
Ventilation	<b>LOCAL EXHAUST:</b> Open doors & windows. Exhaust ventilation capable of maintaining emissions at the point of use below PEL. If used in enclosed area, use exhaust fans. Exhaust fans should be explosion-proof or set up in a way that flammable concentrations of solvent vapors are not exposed to electrical fixtures or hot surfaces.			
<b>Section 9</b>	<b>Physical and Chemical Properties</b>			
NFPA Hazard Signal	Health 2	Stability 1	Flammability 3	Special None
HMIS Hazard Signal	Health 3	Stability 1	Flammability 4	Special None
Boiling Point	151 °F/66 °C			
Melting Point	N/A			

TABLE S-1 Continued

Vapor Pressure	145 mmHg @ 20°C
Vapor Density (Air = 1)	2.5
Volatile Components	70–80%
Solubility In Water	Negligible
PH	N/A
Specific Gravity	0.95 + / – 0.015
Evaporation Rate	(BUAC = 1) = 5.5 – 8.0
Appearance	Clear Liquid
Odor	Ether-Like
Will Dissolve In	Tetrahydrofuran
Material Is	Liquid

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**TABLE S-1** Concluded