Electrical safety toolbox talk

Fire and electricity · about 5 minutes · read it out, or say it in your own words

SITE OR JOB	DATE	PRESENTER

A building site is hard on electrical gear: leads get driven over, cut by sheeting, soaked in rain and patched with tape. Electricity gives no warning before it shocks or burns, and overhead lines and buried cables are easy to forget until a ladder, a tipper or a spade touches one.

SAY THIS

No second chances

You cannot see, hear or smell electricity. A shock can stop your heart, burn you deeply or throw you off a ladder or scaffold. Most site shocks come from ordinary things: a damaged lead, a wet plug, a tool with a cracked casing, or someone fiddling with the DB board. So we treat every cable as live until a competent person proves otherwise.

The DB board belongs to one person

Our temporary supply is controlled by a competent person appointed in writing, and it is inspected every week and written up. Nobody else connects, opens up or changes the DB board. Keep its door closed and keep it out of the rain. Never bypass an earth leakage unit because it keeps tripping. If it trips, it is telling us something is wrong, so stop and report it.

Check your lead and tool before you plug in

Every morning, look at your tool, its cord and plug, and your extension lead. Reject anything with cuts, bare wire, burnt marks, broken plugs or tape repairs. Never push bare wires into a socket. Tools must be plugged into a supply with earth leakage protection, or be marked as double insulated. If something is damaged or got wet, label it 'do not use' and hand it in.

Look after the leads

Run leads where they will not be driven over, walked through or cut by sharp edges. Keep them out of water and off wet slabs, and hang them up where you can. Do not overload multi-plugs or join lead after lead. Unplug by the plug, not by pulling the cord.

Look up and look down

Before work starts we must find out about any cables over, under or on the site. Nobody may come too close to an overhead power line, in person or with a ladder, scaffold tube, tipper body, crane boom or stack of material, without the line owner's permission. Do not dig until buried cables have been located. If you are unsure, stop and ask.

If someone gets a shock

Do not touch them while they may still be in contact with the power. Switch off at the DB board or pull the plug first. Then call the first aider and get medical help. Report it, so it can be written up and looked into.

CHECK ON SITE TODAY

- [ ] Look at the DB board: door closed, protected from rain, no loose wires, and the weekly inspection register up to date.
- [ ] Ask the appointed person to test the earth leakage unit with its test button.
- [ ] Check every extension lead and tool cord in use today for cuts, bare wire and tape repairs.
- [ ] Walk the lead routes: leads lifted off the ground, out of water and away from vehicle routes.
- [ ] Point out any overhead lines near the site and where ladders, scaffolds and trucks must not go.
- [ ] Ask whether any digging is planned and whether buried cables have been located.

ASK THE CREW

- ? What would you do if the earth leakage on the DB board kept tripping when you plug in?
- ? Where are the overhead lines on or near this site, and what work today could get close to them?
- ? Which of our leads or tools would you not trust right now, and why?
- ? If you found someone lying against a live cable, what is the first thing you would do?

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR THIS JOB

Normal site PPE: hard hat, safety boots and high-visibility vest · Electricians use insulated tools and the protective equipment their own risk assessment calls for

THE LAW

Construction Regulations, 2014, regulation 24: Electrical installations and machinery on construction sites; Electrical Machinery Regulations, 2011, regulation 10: Portable electric tools; Electrical Machinery Regulations, 2011, regulation 19: Overhead power lines. What each one says, in plain words, with links: sitediary.co.za/toolbox-talks/electrical-safety/

Toolbox talk attendance register

TOPIC

Electrical safety on site

DATE

SITE OR JOB

TIME

PRESENTER

COMPANY

PRESENTER SIGNATURE

By signing, I confirm that I attended this toolbox talk, that it was given in a language I understand, and that I could ask questions.

NO.	NAME AND SURNAME	COMPANY OR TRADE	SIGNATURE
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Keep this register in the site health and safety file. Log the talk in today's site diary with a photo of this page.