

N E W S R E L E A S E

News Release No.: 2018-66

Date: August 16, 2018

Cal/OSHA Issues Citations to Outdoor Advertising Company for Billboard Electric Shock Accident

Los Angeles—Cal/OSHA has issued citations to an outdoor advertising company for serious safety violations after a worker suffered third-degree burns when a metal pole he was using to install a sign on a billboard came into contact with an overhead power line.

On February 6, two sign hangers for Outfront Media were working 25 feet above ground on the billboard’s platform to install a vinyl sign over West 3rd Street. The workers were using 11-foot poles to place the 14-by-48-foot sign. One of the metal poles touched an energized high-voltage power line located near the edge of the billboard, which resulted in serious burns to 25 percent of the sign-hanger’s body.

“Employers must identify and evaluate all hazards in the workplace,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Juliann Sum. “When energized overhead lines are present, the employer must ensure that employees maintain required clearances, or minimum safe distances from the overhead lines, to protect employees from electrical shock or electrocution.”

Cal/OSHA issued three citations to Outfront Media totaling \$32,435 in proposed penalties. A serious accident-related citation was issued for the employer’s violation of [provisions for preventing accidents due to proximity to overhead lines](#), which requires a minimum clearance of 6 feet be maintained for work done near 34.5 kilovolt lines. A serious citation was issued for failure to identify and evaluate hazards related to installing signs on billboards in proximity to power lines. Cal/OSHA also issued a general citation to the employer for an inadequate heat illness prevention plan for its outdoor workers.

Since 2015, Cal/OSHA has opened [11 inspections](#) with outdoor and display advertising employers. Among those inspections were six accidents, including an [electric shock incident](#) last year when a worker’s ladder came into contact with overhead power lines during preparations to hang a sign.

A citation is classified as serious when there is a realistic possibility that death or serious harm could result from the actual hazard created by the violation.

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, or Cal/OSHA, is the division within the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) that helps protect California's workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace.

Cal/OSHA offers a [fact sheet](#) for safety meetings on working safely on or near high voltage overhead lines. [Cal/OSHA's Consultation Services Branch](#) provides free and voluntary assistance to employers to improve their safety and health programs. Employers should call (800) 963-9424 for assistance from Cal/OSHA Consultation Services.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR's Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734). Complaints can also be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA district offices](#).

Members of the press may contact Peter Melton or Frank Polizzi at (510) 286-1161, and are encouraged to [subscribe to get email alerts](#) on DIR's press releases or other departmental updates.

###



The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). For general inquiries, contact DIR's Call Center at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.