

APS SAFETY NOTICE

SIMPLE CHANGES CAN BE HAZARDOUS

Argonne National Laboratory employees are encouraged to be creative and innovative in their work. But employees don't always think-through "improvements" before making them. Improvements need to be considered in light of their capacity for creating new or changed hazards.



If there's energized, high-voltage equipment on the other side, this is wrong, wrong, wrong!

Recently, an ANL employee was installing signs on repainted electrical enclosures, using an approved adhesive and tape to hold the signs in place until the adhesive cured. The employee decided to use metal screws as a fastener, feeling this would be a better way of installing the signs without marring the newly painted surfaces.

The employee then drilled and tapped through four electrical enclosures while the cabling inside was energized. Ironically, the signs being posted read "**Danger: High Voltage.**" Fortunately, no injury or cable damage resulted. This employee was well trained, experienced, and had specific knowledge of the electrical equipment. The employee just knew (as in: assumed) that the drilling locations would not result in drill-bit contact with energized equipment.

The worker went beyond the safety envelope of the assigned tasks, was not wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment for the new hazardous conditions, and thought he understood how to handle the hazards involved, based on his experience and knowledge, without considering the full implications of altering the assigned tasks. Also, worker familiarity with electrical work resulted in some complacency in considering its hazards.

The moral of the story: Even the apparently simplest tasks (or minor changes) should be thought through and evaluated in terms of the safety envelope, and then approved by your supervisor.

REMEMBER: The Core Functions of Integrated Safety Management (ISM) are to

Define the work scope

Analyze the work hazards

Develop and implement hazard controls

Perform the work within the hazard controls

Provide feedback and improvement for future work.

It is permissible to modify the work scope only when fulfillment of the remaining functions is ensured.