

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Worth District
Safety & Occupational Health Office**

Lessons Learned

ACCIDENT: Lightning

Date: 09 Oct 2001

WHAT HAPPENED: Workers were pulling communication wire between manholes when lightning struck in the vicinity. Workers stated that they felt static and heard popping sounds. It began to rain so they went to their vehicle to wait out the storm. After the rain stopped they finished pulling the wire. Afterwards they felt strain and nausea.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:

- Adverse weather conditions for outside work.

RESULTS: Workers were taken to the Urgent Care Clinic and hospital in the area. One worker was released and two others were kept over night for observation. All workers returned to work the next day; their supervisor gave them the day off. No lost time.

LESSONS LEARNED:

Reference- EM 385-1-1, USACE SAFETY & HEALTH Requirements Manual

- 01.E.02 Planning for any operation shall include the total system response capabilities to minimize the consequences of accidents or natural disaster and shall consider communications, rescue, first aid, medical, emergency response, emergency equipment, and training requirements.
- When working outside stay aware of weather conditions
- To know when to seek shelter use the '30-30 Rule'. (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)

'30-30 Rule' When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 03 seconds or less seek proper shelter. If you can't see the lightning, just hearing the thunder is a good back-up rule. Wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving shelter.

ACTIONS: Suspend all outside work activities during storms that may produce lightning. Seek shelter from the storm.