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PURPOSE

Tampa Electric Company (TEC) and TECO Services, Inc. (TSI) are committed to the belief that all injuries are preventable and to providing a safe workplace for all employees through increased awareness of hazards and appropriate risk management practices.

INTRODUCTION

Lightning is a naturally occurring phenomenon occurring throughout the year, but particularly in the Summer, with over 100 lightning days per year. The State of Florida leads the United States in lightning strikes, including injuries and fatalities. Many victims struck by lightning have lasting nerve or brain damage, and potential lifelong skin damage from burns.

While the probability of being struck by lightning is very low, the consequences are severe. Additionally, TEC and TSI have substantial exposure to lightning strikes due to job descriptions that place many employees primarily outdoors, working at elevated levels, and often working in inclement weather.

RESPONSIBILITY

TEC and TSI will provide tools and education necessary for decision making on when to stop work and seek shelter; however, no tool, procedure, or training can replace personal responsibility or a team member's ability to assess risk. Lightning strikes can occur at any time absent any environmental indicators (thunder, visible strikes, etc.), and before smartphone apps or lightning detectors can provide warning.

All Management/Supervisors/Performance Coaches are responsible to make sure team members and contractors are knowledgeable of the risks associated with lightning strikes and how best to mitigate the risk. All employees should use their ability to assess risk and all available tools to determine when to stop work, take shelter, and resume work.

The employees working in the control room at each station in Energy Supply shall follow the Energy Supply Severe Weather Notification procedure (ES-SAF-00002).

On-site Crew Leaders should utilize their ability to assess risk and determine when to stop work and seek shelter. Job Safety Briefings and assessments should include recognition of lightning as a hazard and actions to be taken to reduce risk if work is shut down.

The Vice President of Safety and the Joint Department Committees (JDC), is responsible for reviewing, maintaining and revising this program as necessary. Responsibilities supporting this objective may be assigned to others as designated.

Contractors are responsible for training their employees on the hazards created by lightning and severe weather.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Target Audience – Tampa Electric employees and contractors who work for Tampa electric Company.

Frequency – Annually.

Methods – Training shall be accomplished through Computer-Based Training (CBT), PowerPoint, video, or other training materials determined adequate by the Safety Department. At a minimum, the content of this training shall include the specifics of this program.

Documentation – All employee and contractor training will be documented via a sign in roster. When Computer Based Training is used, the training may be documented in a separate CBT program.

SEVERE WEATHER PLANNING AND PRECAUTIONS

It is the responsibility of each Manager/Supervisor and contractor management to ensure their team members are aware of the risks associated with working outdoors in inclement weather. Awareness can be reinforced through annual training and augmented by periodic reminders during safety meetings, Job Safety Briefings and situational communications depending on local weather conditions.

Job Safety Briefings should include recognition of lightning hazards and actions to be taken when lightning encroaches on the work location.

When employees and contractors are working in the absence of a Manager/Supervisor, it is the responsibility of the employee and contractor to monitor the radio or other communication devices and be observant of any changing weather conditions in their immediate area.

SEVERE WEATHER MONITORING

Management/Supervision should discuss and review the potential for severe weather each morning with crews expected to work outside each morning during Job Safety Briefings.

Crew leaders are responsible for monitoring the weather at their work location for the day. Smartphone apps, radio, or other reasonable methods may be used to monitor severe weather.

Tools and technologies do not replace all team members ability to assess risk and render good judgement.

The employees working in the control room at each station in Energy Supply shall follow the Energy Supply Severe Weather Notification procedure.

SEVERE WEATHER RESPONSE

Supervision will receive an alert when lightning or other severe weather is detected within their assigned Service Area or work location. Upon receipt of this message, the Supervisor will alert field personnel through the radio or cell phone to heighten awareness of severe weather.

Crew Leaders and all field personnel should observe the weather conditions, perform a risk assessment for any lightning, and use good judgment to secure work and seek shelter.

Work should only resume when the severe weather has passed through the area.

SEVERE WEATHER SHELTER

No outdoor space should be considered safe during severe weather. Trees, open fields, bodies of water, etc. are all subject to lightning strikes. Field personnel should seek shelter indoors or inside a vehicle.

SEVERE WEATHER RISK ASSESSMENT

Best Practices for Assessing Weather Related Risk:

If any employee or contractor does not feel safe working or operating during a Severe Weather Alert, the employee shall notify their immediate manager/supervisor and the following considerations should be discussed:

1. The employee and the manager/supervisor will discuss the task, location, duration, urgency and together visually observe the weather from a safe location.
2. The weather observation should include the following:
 - a. Wind direction
 - b. Direction of storm movement
 - c. Storm clouds in the immediate area
 - d. Access local radar and determine when the immediate storm threat will pass
3. Lightning strike frequency and proximity.
 - a. All personnel should use the “Flash/Bang” method to determine frequency and proximity.
 - b. Flash/Bang Lightning Proximity Detection Method:
 - I. If you see lightning, count the number of seconds until you hear thunder.
 - II. Divide the number of seconds by 5 to get the number of miles the lightning is away from you.

III. Example: If you see lightning and it takes 10 seconds before you hear thunder, the lightning is 2 miles from you (10 divided by 5 = 2 miles).

If thunder is heard	Lightning is ...
5 seconds after a flash	1 mile away
10 seconds after a flash	2 miles away
15 seconds after a flash	3 miles away
20 seconds after a flash	4 miles away
25 seconds after a flash	5 miles away
30 seconds after a flash	6 miles away
35 seconds after a flash	7 miles away
40 seconds after a flash	8 miles away

Using the observations in items 1 through 3, the employee and the manager/supervisor should be able to determine how and when to proceed with the task in question.

Management reserves the right to use judgement and may choose to ask personnel to perform a task during an emergency situation. An emergency situation may include but is not limited to situations that may lead to personnel injury, catastrophic equipment damage, environmental compliance violations, or risks to public safety. The employee reserves the right to refuse that work assignment and employ the JDC to review the situation at a later date. Additionally, all employees may refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), Article VIII, for additional guidance.