Utilities & Power Lines: Live-Wire Risks for Field Crews Picture This



This image shows a utility crew working from an aerial bucket truck along a roadside distribution line. A lineman reaches toward overhead conductors believed to be de-energized while a ground worker monitors below. The scene appears routine, but one verification step was rushed. The line remains energized. As the worker makes contact, a sudden arc flash erupts. In a fraction of a second, electrical current travels through his body. The bucket jolts, tools drop, and the worker collapses inside the lift.

High voltage does not forgive assumptions. Failure to test for absence of voltage, improper grounding, miscommunication, or skipping lockout procedures can turn standard maintenance into a fatal incident. Always verify de-energization with

properly rated equipment, apply protective grounds, maintain minimum approach distances, wear arc-rated PPE, and follow switching procedures without shortcuts. With live wires, certainty saves lives.