

## Working Near Electricity

Position Responsible: Clinical Director  
CGC Approved: October 2010

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Related Documents                      PAM 15 – Working near Electricity

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### **1.0 Background**

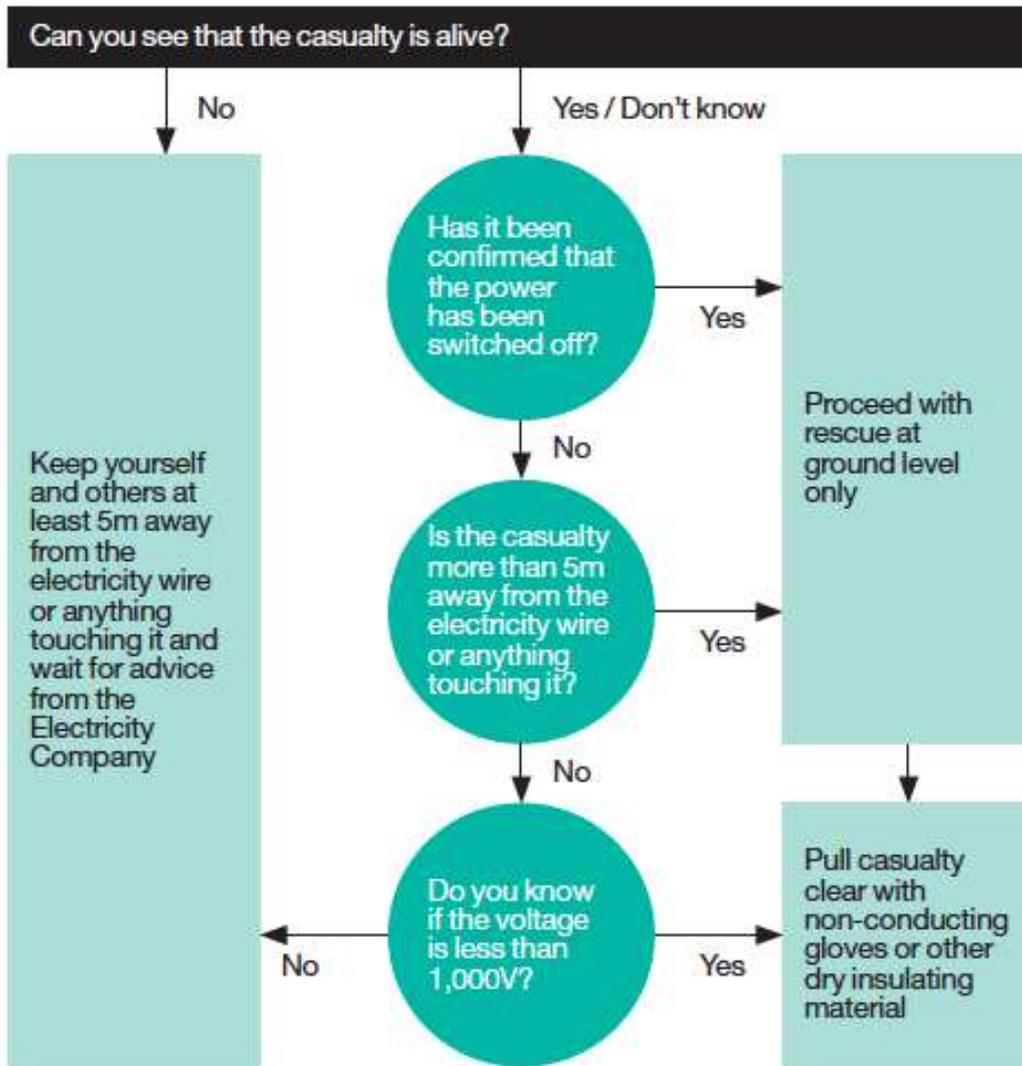
- 1.1 The team is likely to attend incidents that involve or are in close proximity to a number of sources of electricity. This can range from domestic voltage (230V) to pylons (400,000 volts) and electricity substations. Working near electricity can pose a significant risk to the Team, and others working for the patient, and it is important that the Team is aware of this and ensure their own safety at all times.
- 1.2 The safety of the Team is paramount at all times, and no risks should be taken when aware of electrical hazards. Do not be tempted to rescue a patient before the safety of the Team can be confirmed.

### **2.0 Important Principles**

- 2.1 There are a number of important principles to know about when considering working near electricity:
- a) Don't be tempted to start a rescue before safety has been confirmed.
  - b) NEVER assume that electrical equipment/wires are dead even if wires have fallen or broken.
  - c) Power supplies can be switched back on at any time without warning.
  - d) Electricity can arc up to 10 metres from overhead cables.
  - e) Trees, string, ropes, road crash barriers and water all can conduct electricity.
  - f) Rubber boots will not protect you.

### **3.0 Dealing with patients**

- 3.1 A scene assessment upon arrival should include looking up and around for all sources of electricity in the vicinity
- 3.2 If the Fire and Rescue Service are on-scene, liaise with the Incident Commander about electrical risks and other hazards.
- 3.3 If there are no obvious electrical hazards, proceed to the patient with caution looking for further evidence of hazards at all times.
- 3.4 If there is an electrical hazard identified in the vicinity of the patient/incident, the following algorithm should be followed:



The 'DANGER OF DEATH' sign (see below) indicates electricity lines carrying more than 1000 Volts



3.5 The 24 hour emergency numbers for the regional electricity board within the East of England is **0800 783 8838 and 0800 056 8090** for East Midlands. Contact can be made via Ambulance Control or using the emergency telephone number displayed on pylons. The operators will need

- the precise location of the incident
- a landline telephone number in order to identify the area office dealing with your call through there automated system. It is suggested that you give the Magpas Office telephone number (01480 455004) if you are unable to give a local telephone number
- if possible, the identity number on the electrical supply (neighbouring pylons or substation)