

# Spot The Safety Violation: Water + Electricity = Bad Combination



Is this how you want your workers doing electrical work’

You don’t have to be an electrical engineer to recognize that it’s not a great idea to repair electrical equipment with one’s feet immersed in a puddle. The worker in this picture was fortunate to survive the experience but others haven’t been so lucky.

*Example:* While working on a residential pool project, a young laborer was electrocuted after he tried to force a 120V plug into a 240V receptacle while standing in water.

Electrical hazards can cause injuries and deaths to workers. For example, according to a recent report on electrical safety in Ontario, from 2008-2012, there were 25 electrical-related fatalities<sup>15</sup> of which involved workers. Safety incidents tend to be associated with unsafe work practices, according to this report.

And between 2008-2012 in BC, 320 workers were injured or killed by electrical shock or electrocution.

In general, studies have shown that the highest proportion of electrocution deaths is among:

- Electricians
- Utility workers
- Those working in construction and manufacturing.

In addition, electrical-related fatalities are more common among [young workers](#). And contact with [overhead power lines](#) is reportedly by far the most frequent cause of fatal occupational electrocutions.

Electrical equipment is very dangerous on its own. Water or wet/moist conditions heighten that danger. For example, [after a flood](#), the risk of electrical shock is a common and serious safety hazard.

## **10 Electrical Safety Dos & Don'ts**

**DO** inspect electric cords and equipment to ensure they're in good shape before using them

**DON'T** run extension cords across doorways or under carpets

**DO** avoid overloading electrical outlets

**DON'T** work on electrical equipment or installations when you're wet or while standing in water

**DO** replace or repair damaged or loose electrical cords

**DON'T** repair electric cords or equipment unless you're qualified and authorized to do so

**DO** use ground-fault circuit interrupters when working in damp locations

**DON'T** touch fallen power lines

**DO** call the electric company immediately to report downed lines

**DON'T** get any closer than 10 feet away from overhead power lines while working outdoors