



NUTSEA

NATIONAL UTILITY TRAINING & SAFETY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
SAFETY • SKILL • SERVICE

December 2017

Dear NUTSEA Members:

We are into December 2017 and wow, what a fast year it has been! Since my last letter to you Greg McCoy has resigned as a Director, due to accepting a different job which will not allow him to serve due to scheduling. I have asked Jim Carpenter from Michigan to assume this position, which he has done.

In January 2018 the NUTSEA Board will be meeting in Louisville, Kentucky to apply the finishing touches to the 2018 conference which takes place in September 2018.

NUTSEA continues to ask members to step up and send their names or other members' names to Glenn Cunningham (Nominating Committee Chair) for a 3-year director position. His contact information can be found on the NUTSEA website.

I have talked with Cory Parr and Bud Branham, and as most of you know, they have been gathering information along with the help of our membership regarding injuries that have costs in excess of \$100,000. They have also began putting together tools to help us better understand and then prevent these injuries. Cory and Bud will be rolling these tools out in the near future.

So WHY does our industry continue to have contact incidents? The same rules from over 75 years are still in effect but better PPE is now available.

Our workers know electricity can be dangerous enough to injure or kill. Why then are we still having contact incidents?

There is a story by Paul Wesslund. *Reprinted by permission from Kentucky Living, October 2017*, titled "Retrain Your Brain to be Careful around Electricity" that attempts to answer this question. Why do people think "it can't happen to me"? Dr. Sarah Shelton, license clinical psychologist and president elect of the Kentucky Psychological Association says "It's called 'optimism bias.' We see ourselves as special. Statistics don't apply to us but to others.

Dr. Shelton also blames the fast paced world of smartphones and constant, multiple demands for our attention. "We live in an overstimulated society with sensory overload," she says. "Our brains are doing more than they can handle almost all the time."

When we see something that is not correct or an unsafe act we have a decision to make; ignore it or bring it to the employee's attention as to what is being done incorrectly. How many of us ignore it because you're afraid your buddy will not appreciate it or will make fun of you and by

the way it may take time away from my busy workday? If you chose to bring it to your buddy's attention, how do you do it? Do you make fun of the way they are doing the job (shaming them) or do you explain what may happen if they continued to do the work process the way they are going about it?

Why do we come to work each day? Maybe, because we love what we do or is it to support our family? Either way, when someone takes a shortcut they are not thinking about their family, they are only thinking about getting the job done! Does your company expect you to take shortcuts?

Do we all have a "False Sense of Security"? We preach and they shall listen! It is up to us "Safety Professionals" to strive for perfection, not only strive for perfection, but demand perfection when it comes to safety.

As safety professionals we preach proper use of PPE and grounding but when we investigate incidents we find that most, if not all, are caused by not wearing the proper PPE or as a result of not grounding. Choosing to use PPE while doing electrical work, there should be no choice. We set examples each day, if at work or at home. Someone is watching us perform our duties. What example are we setting? Not saying something when you see someone not following a safety rule is saying it is alright to do!

As safety professionals we should be ashamed to be content with the on-going electrical contact incidents, let's choose to stand up and make a difference.

I hope all of you have a very Merry Christmas and I hope 2018 will be a prosperous one for you and your family.

Sincerely,

National Utility Training & Safety
Education Association

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Ed Burris".

Jim Ed Burris
2018 NUTSEA Chairman