

FM SAFETY ALERT

Near Miss 11-21-06 Electrical Work

Incident

An electrician was working on an electrical panel (500 amp) where a breaker was missing, exposing live parts. While screwing in a cover over the left side of this opening, the right side of the cover slid in to the open area and contacted the live parts. An arc flash occurred and the circuit breaker tripped. The employee was standing off to the side and wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (coat, gloves, hard hat, face mask). He was not injured.

Problem

Lockout/tagout (LO/TO) was not used on the equipment prior to beginning work (this would have cut power throughout the entire building including lights, elevators, and fans). This left the possibility of contacting live parts. If work on live equipment was to be performed, a team of two people should have completed the task.

Corrective Actions Being Taken

- 1.) Better Planning – plan the task for the weekend so LO/TO can be performed with minimal effects on the building.
- 2.) Better Communication – if a task should involve two people and only one is assigned, the employee should stop work and alert their supervisor.



Electrical panel involved in incident



Close up view of installed cover. Right side of this cover contacted live parts during installation resulting in an arc flash.