

Electrical Exposure Killed 130 Workers in 2024 as New York Rule Presumes Every Line Is Live

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, August 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Exposure to electricity killed 130 workers in the United States in 2024, down from 142 the prior year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in its Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. [Gorayeb & Associates, P.C.](#), the New York construction accident firm known as The People's Lawyers, is issuing this advisory so injured workers understand what New York demands of the contractors who put them near live current.



Gorayeb & Associates, P.C.

Construction and extraction occupations recorded 1,032 of the 5,070 fatal work injuries counted nationwide in 2024. Electrocutation remains one of the four hazards OSHA blames for most construction deaths, and the federal rules on wiring and work practices sit in Subpart K of the construction standards.

New York goes further. Under the electrical hazards section of Industrial Code Rule 23, every power line and power facility near a construction, demolition or excavation site must be treated as energized until qualified representatives of the line's owner give assurance otherwise. The employer must determine voltage levels before work begins. Where the exact location of an underground line is unknown, workers using jack hammers, bars or similar hand tools must be supplied insulated gloves, body aprons and footwear.

The notice requirements go further. At least five normal working days before work begins within

10 feet of a live overhead line, or before excavation that might disturb a live underground line, the employer must notify the affected utility in writing. Where a person or equipment must come within 10 feet of an energized high voltage line, meaning any circuit over 300 volts to ground, the line's owner has one normal working day to advise on procedure, and the employer must follow it.

Each is a concrete specification. Section 241(6) of the New York Labor Law imposes liability on owners and contractors when a specific Industrial Code provision is violated and causes injury. Courts treat that duty as nondelegable.

"Clients tell me the panel was supposed to be dead. Somebody said it was dead," said Christopher J. [Gorayeb](#), founding partner of [Gorayeb & Associates](#). "In New York that is not enough. The rule presumes the line is live until its owner confirms otherwise. A contractor who skips that step does not get to blame the worker for trusting him."

City records show how close this run. The Department of Buildings documented a July 2025 case in Manhattan where a worker opening an HVAC condenser panel on an 18-story roof took a sudden flash to the face and fell backward. Inspectors found the unit still carried current. A separate 2025 fatality involved a worker severely burned while welding at an unpermitted renovation.

"Get to a hospital the same day and have the burn documented. Arc injuries look minor on the surface, and the nerve damage surfaces weeks later," Gorayeb said. "Then find out who notified the utility and when. That notice has to be in writing. When it is missing from the file, the absence is the case."

About Gorayeb & Associates, P.C.

Founded in 1986 by Christopher J. Gorayeb, Gorayeb & Associates, P.C. is a New York personal injury law firm concentrating in construction accident and occupational injury litigation. The firm has recovered more than \$2 billion for more than 12,000 injured workers and their families. Known to the communities it serves as The People's Lawyers; the firm provides bilingual representation in English and Spanish throughout New York City and New York State. More

information is available at www.gorayeb.com.

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