



Sparks Ignite...Buildings Burn... Lives are Lost

How many forms of "ignition" would you say are on a typical construction site? Ten? Twenty? Fifty? How about 100? So where does the typical electrician fit into this picture?

Here's some fire categories to consider before you find yourself saying "Not me, no sir, I don't cause any fires."

Electrical Items:

- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|--|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are defects in electrical equipment remedied at once? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are good lock-out/tag-out practices utilized where needed on site? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is temporary extension wiring kept to a minimum, and is care taken not to overload existing circuits? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the use of portable lamps kept to a minimum, and are the ones being used provided with appropriate guards? Is the height appropriate? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the main switches of all electrical circuits in the off position when the equipment is not in use? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is fire equipment maintained in good working order at all times and is it accessible for immediate use? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you work in any "confined spaces" where fumes, solvents, dust, can accumulate, and ignite when a spark is created? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your company have a policy to establish a "fire watch" whenever you're involved in ignition practices? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are flammable liquids handled only at safe distances from possible sources of ignition? |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are suitable non-sparking tools provided for use in places where flammable liquids are kept, or used? |

How many of these ten questions did you answer "yes?" One? O.K., then maybe you're a firebug, and don't know it.

Did you find yourself having trouble answering any of these ten questions with a clear YES, or NO? Did you want to sometimes answer by saying maybe?

If there are ten to fifteen sub-contracting trades on a given jobsite, it's entirely possible that each of these fifteen subs has at least a dozen fire-producing tools, processes, or people who produce one or more "sparks" (ignition) while performing their daily construction routines.

So multiply 15 times 12 and you get a total of 180 possible fire hazards / sparks / ignitions / explosions / fires / destruction / injuries / fatalities / property damage / buildings burned to the ground.

Electricity just may be the cause of these hazards, these sparks, these ignitions, these explosions, these fires, these destructions, these injuries, these fatalities, these property damages, these buildings burning to the ground.

It's a team effort to prevent fires on a construction site. These possible 180 fires could be avoided if we each accept responsibility for our portion of a jobsite. If all else fails, good housekeeping is a great fire preventative.