

# FATAL HAZARD



- **Test and verify that electrical circuit elements and parts are de-energized.**
- **Attach proper tags at all points where de-energized equipment or circuits could be energized.**

## Worker dies from electrocution

**INSTRUCTIONS: Hold the guide with this side facing you and the other side facing your crew. Then read the story.**

Our safety talk today is about a 27-year-old apprentice electrician who was electrocuted when connecting wires in a junction box in a bathroom ceiling. During a remodel, the electrical subcontractor disconnected lighting circuits at ceiling junction boxes mounted from the hallway outside of the bathroom without tagging all points where circuits could be energized. Wiring was run to adjacent junction boxes: one for general lighting and the other for emergency lighting. The apprentice electrician located the circuit breaker for the emergency lighting on a different floor, shut it off and locked out the circuit breaker. He then reconnected wires to one of the existing junction boxes in the hallway. A witness observed him finishing up connections in the general lighting boxes rather than the emergency lighting junction box. The apprentice mentioned to the witness that he had just been shocked. The witness heard the apprentice electrician fall and then found him collapsed on the restroom floor. It appeared that the apprentice electrician reconnected the wrong wires in the hallway junction box and energized the general lighting circuit.



Pictogram from [Federal OSHA e-tool](https://www.osha-slc.gov/e-tool)

**So here are some ways we can prevent something like this from happening where we work.**

- Always test the circuits and electrical parts for current. Check volt-ohm meter on a known live source of same rating to ensure it works before and after checking the circuit on which you will be working.
- When de-energizing equipment or circuits, attach proper lockout locks with tags at all energy isolating devices from which equipment or circuits being worked on could become energized.

**ASK: “Does anyone have more ideas or comments to share?”**  
**Pause for discussion. Then see if there are ways to take action.**

**END WITH ACTION PLAN (ideas for what to ask or say).**

- “If you work on equipment or near circuits and are unsure if they are energized, what should you do?”
- “What do you all do to make sure people do not come in contact with energized wires?”
- Discuss a similar situation at your current site
- Express your commitment to training people for each task they perform
- Commit to follow-up at the next safety talk