



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

## Department of Consumer and Business Services

Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division (OR-OSHA)

350 Winter Street NE, Room 430

P.O. Box 14480

Salem, OR 97309-0405

Phone: (503) 378-3272

Toll Free: 1-800-922-2689

Fax: (503) 947-7461

[www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org)

June 28, 1996

Ronald Jones  
I.B.E.W.  
PO Box 669  
Medford, OR 97501

Dear Mr Jones:

Your letter of May 30, 1996 to Loy Knutzen of our Eugene field office was forwarded to me for a response. In this letter you ask if it is an acceptable practice for a qualified apprentice and those in training in the tree trimming business to operate switching devices under the direct supervision of a qualified line person?

OSHA has no requirement that a person doing high voltage work be a journey lineman or an apprentice lineman. OSHA requires that the person be knowledgeable in the safe work practices and hazards associated with high voltage work in their trade and the work task they are performing.

A qualified person is one who is knowledgeable in the operation of electric power generation, transmission and distribution equipment involved in their work tasks, along with the associated hazards. The employer must ensure that the training provided includes all applicable training elements required under 1910.269(a)(2)(I) and (ii) and the work practices throughout 1910.269 that pertain to that person's work task. Employees performing switching or any other high voltage work task, whether a trainee or an apprentice, must have first demonstrated to the employer their proficiency in performing this work task.

Before allowing a person to operate high voltage switches, Blachly-Lane Coop would be required to first qualify the person through training and supervision to safely perform the work task.

If we can be of further assistance to you please call Jerry Hoard or myself.

Sincerely,

Marilyn K. Schuster, Manager  
Standards & Technical Resources Section  
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division