



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Consumer and Business Services  
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division (Oregon OSHA)

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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 the Technical section 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?

Oregon OSHA does not require a person doing high voltage work to be a journey lineman or an apprentice lineman. Oregon 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 437-002-2300(2)(a) and (b) and the work practices throughout Division 2/RR 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, the employer is required to first qualify the person through training and supervision to safely perform the work task.

If we can be of further assistance, call Oregon OSHA's Technical Section at 503-378-3272. You are also invited to visit Oregon OSHA's website at [www.osha.oregon.gov](http://www.osha.oregon.gov)

Sincerely,

Trena VanDeHey, Standards & Technical Resources Manager  
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division