



Grounding: Are You Really Protected?

When a line is de-energized for work, temporary protective grounds are one of a lineworker's most important protections. But just putting a ground on the line doesn't automatically make the job safe.

The goal is to create an **equipotential zone**—an area where the worker, line, truck, tools, and other metal objects are at nearly the same electrical potential. If the line becomes energized or fault current enters the work area, this helps prevent dangerous current from flowing through a worker.

Why It Matters

A worker can be shocked without directly touching an energized line. For example:

- **Touch potential:** You touch two objects that are at different voltages.
- **Step potential:** Your feet are in areas with different voltages.

Proper grounding and bonding help reduce these differences.

Before You Start

Don't just ask, "**Is it grounded?**" Ask:

- Are the grounds installed correctly?
- Are the line, equipment, truck and other conductive parts properly bonded?
- Could I be touching two objects at different voltages?
- Are the grounds rated for the fault current they could carry?
- Does the grounding setup match the job and system?

Remember:

The goal of grounding isn't simply to connect a line to the earth. The goal is to protect the worker.

Take the time to make sure your grounding system creates a safe work area where dangerous voltage differences are minimized.

Ground it. Bond it. Check it. Then get to work.