



Take Care of the Person Behind the PPE

Safety isn't just about wearing the right PPE, following procedures, or watching for hazards. It's also about taking care of your mental health.

Utility work can be demanding. Long hours, emergencies, storm restoration, difficult situations, and the pressure to get the job done can take a toll. Sometimes we get so focused on looking out for our coworkers that we forget to look out for ourselves.

Pay Attention to the Warning Signs

Mental health can affect your safety just like physical fatigue can. Take notice if you or a coworker is:

- Feeling unusually stressed, anxious, angry or down
- Having trouble sleeping or concentrating
- Losing interest in things you normally enjoy
- Feeling exhausted even after getting enough rest
- Withdrawing from coworkers, friends or family
- Relying more heavily on alcohol or other substances to cope

Take Care of Yourself

Make time for the things that help you recharge—sleep, exercise, time with family and friends, hobbies, or simply taking a break. Talk to someone when things aren't going well. **You don't have to wait until you're in crisis to ask for help.**

And remember to check in on your coworkers. Sometimes a simple "How are you doing?" can open the door to a conversation someone needs.

There's No Weakness in Asking for Help

Taking care of your mental health is part of taking care of your overall safety. If you're struggling, reach out to someone you trust or use your employee assistance program or other available resources.

You spend a lot of time looking out for the people around you. Don't forget to look out for yourself, too.