



COMMITMENT TO ZERO CONTACTS

Implementation Guide for Senior Leaders



FEDERATED RURAL ELECTRIC
INSURANCE EXCHANGE

TOGETHER, we can reduce exposure to electrical contacts.

Every cooperative aspires to eliminate serious injuries due to electrical contacts. In an effort to achieve this, we often implement new action plans to reduce high-risk behavior. Unfortunately, even when we are successful in changing behavior, we fall victim to the “change initiative risk cycle” (see diagram), resulting in old behaviors returning and improvements being lost.

Our challenge is to break this cycle. This guide outlines specific steps to help co-op senior leaders assess their co-op’s practices, make improvements where needed and create an approach to sustain improvement.

Join us in a commitment to zero contacts.

Change Initiative Risk Cycle



1 / View the CEO “Commitment to Zero Contacts” Introductory Video

Watch this video featuring John Lee, president and CEO of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative, as he explains the “Commitment to Zero Contacts” initiative—a nationwide effort to eliminate electrical contacts. John shares his perspective on the challenges we face as co-ops and the journey we must all pursue in an effort to make life-saving differences for our people and their families. Visit cooperative.com/ZeroContacts to access the video.

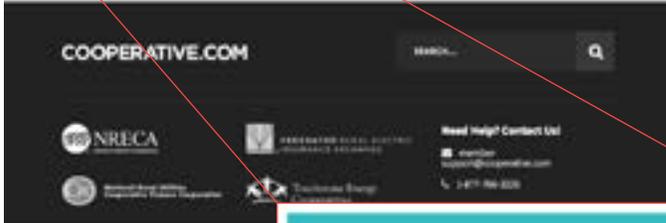




CEO Commitment Form

CEOs: Make a voluntary commitment for your co-op to join the "Commitment to Zero Contacts" nationwide initiative by submitting the form below. Your commitment could help eliminate serious injuries and fatalities due to electrical contacts.

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2 Make the Commitment

We encourage each senior co-op leader to join this effort and make the commitment to accept this challenge. You can access the commitment form here:

cooperative.com/ZeroContactsForm

Once made, you will receive an email confirmation of your commitment and a certificate of recognition will be provided. Your co-op's name also will be added to a published list of participating co-ops.



3 / Clarify and Define Life-Saving Rules

Over the years, training on Life-Saving Rules (LSRs) has been clear and consistent. However, studies show different cultural forces and employees' perceived expectations of organizational priorities can lead to inconsistent use of these rules, or not applying them at all. This, of course, increases the potential risk of serious injury.

Applying adequate insulated cover, use of proper clearance procedures and use of a designated observer can be interpreted differently among employees in the same co-op. Thus, clearly defining the LSRs and ensuring a consistent understanding of them is fundamental in setting expectations for behavior change and gaining commitment.

To assist you with this, videos are available on cooperative.com and [Federated Rural](https://FederatedRural.com)

Electric Insurance Exchange's website to illustrate certain LSRs and develop a common understanding among staff on how they should be applied.

For Your Consideration

- Create regular two-way conversations regarding LSR practices.
- Consider periodic one-on-one interviews to better understand areas of risk.
- Focus less on past injury rates and more on consistent use of LSRs, recognizing strong performance.

4

Verify Consistent Use of Life-Saving Rules in the Field

Just as important as defining LSRs is verifying their consistent use. Set a clear expectation for the amount of time front-line supervisors should be in the field, with a specific focus on coaching and verifying the use of LSRs. Their regular candid feedback to senior leaders and employees helps with understanding the real exposure to risk and provides the opportunity to take action for improvement before an incident occurs.

Notes for verifying consistent field use of LSRs:

- ✓ Review and address workload issues that may restrict supervisory time in the field.
- ✓ Provide supportive and corrective feedback.
- ✓ Look for areas where actual work practices do not match existing rules or procedures.
- ✓ Look for inconsistencies between crews.
- ✓ Periodically observe after-hours work.
- ✓ Recognize great performance often.
- ✓ Avoid a “safety cop” approach.

5

Confirm Job Planning Sessions are Being Conducted on All Jobs

Like the need to regularly verify the use of LSRs, it is equally important to verify that regular job-planning sessions are effectively being conducted on *all* jobs. Field supervisors should periodically monitor and verify job-planning sessions in the field, as well as review job-planning reports for quality and follow-up. Regular employee feedback and coaching is important in sustaining great performance in this area. It also allows senior leaders to keep a finger on the pulse on field performance and provide specific recognition when opportunities arise.

Notes for Effective Job Planning on all Jobs

- ✓ Verify effectiveness of job planning, especially on routine work (largest area of exposure).
- ✓ Periodically review after-hours jobs.
- ✓ Constantly reinforce the need to slow down to help activate the “slow brain.”
- ✓ Constantly reinforce the need to speak up during review sessions.

6

Create a Structured Safety Management Process

To monitor progress, sustain awareness and enable accountability for followup, create a safety lead team or steering committee consisting of key staff and led by the senior leader. This group should meet regularly (monthly or bimonthly) to be cognizant of field safety performance and to address issues that may arise.

COOPERATIVE SAFETY STEERING COMMITTEE

Committee Makeup

- CEO/GM
- Select Senior Staff
- Select Mid-Management / Supervision
- Safety Manager/Coordinator

Roles & Responsibilities

- Leads/champions
- Sets expectations & direction
- Ensures expectations are met
- Seeks understanding of actual field performance & exposure
- Approves plans & priorities
- Provides resources as needed
- Promotes recognition
- Actively supports & follows up

Additional Activities for Safety Team or Steering Committee

- Receive candid feedback from field observations and other planned activities.
- Oversee that safety expectations are consistently met and barriers are removed as needed.
- Review employee reporting — including suggestions, near misses and hazards — and assign expectations for follow-up.
- Find examples of great performance and provide opportunities for positive recognition.
- Confirm stop or pause work authority is in place and supported. Anyone can stop or pause at-risk behavior at any time.

Conclusion

When a safety management structure is created and effectively performed, it helps ensure safety expectations are being met, potentially reducing the likelihood of electrical contacts. It also lessens the possibility of drifting back to business as usual, with a better chance for sustainability.

For additional resources, visit cooperative.com/ZeroContacts for the “Commitment to Zero Contacts” toolkit. Resources are also available on federatedrural.com.

For questions or support, please contact your statewide safety professionals or:

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