

Eversource Contractor Fatality – Middletown CT January 20, 2019

This information needs to be shared with your employee teams by close of business today or at a stand down tomorrow morning.

At approximately 15:15 PM today, a 4-person contract line crew was assigned an outage in Middletown CT. The crew arrived on site and verified that the cutout was open and then patrolled the single-phase line to the end. They then set up their bucket truck to make repairs to downed primary. While performing the work, they heard a 60 foot 20" diameter tree snap, one Line Mechanic witnessed it falling toward the area and he yelled "RUN!". The Groundworker was struck by the tree and succumb to his injuries. OSHA was notified by local Police/EMS and was responding to the scene.

Please re-enforce the following hazards associated to ice storm damage:

Ice Loading in Trees

Trees can withstand some ice loading however trees with weak structure or previous damage are more vulnerable to fail and can fail at the base or break anywhere throughout their canopy.

Assess the trees and canopy of the ice loading. Once you commit to work, plan an escape route in the event something goes wrong. If your assessment is that a drop hazard exists, and the risk cannot be mitigated, move to your next trouble spot, and circle back later to re-assess. These risk assessment and mitigation plans also apply to ice loaded and damaged electric distribution equipment.

Slippery working and Walking Conditions

Assume your work area is icy before exiting the cab of your truck when arriving at your work site. Use non-slip safety footwear and salt/sand the immediate area around your truck. Use three points of contact when entering and exiting your vehicle, both in the cab and on the platform.

Emergency Planning

Always know your exact location. Confirm communication options for first responders. If cell service is weak or spotty, develop a site-specific communication plan.

Thank you for your commitment to Safety First and Always