

Pole Steps

Distribution Company Awareness

This bulletin provides recommendations for maintenance inspections, regarding pole steps (i.e. step bolts) installed in the distribution system.

Introduction

Poles steps have been installed for decades to help Distributor's line staff access overhead lines. Unfortunately, pole steps can make overhead lines accessible to members of the public as well.

Prior to the 2001 edition of the Overhead Systems standard (C22.3 No.1), protection against climbing of unguarded poles carrying conductors exceeding 1000V, was deemed to be met if permanent steps (e.g. pole steps) were not located less than 2.5m above the ground or surface giving access to the pole. Newer versions of the Overhead Systems standard moved the minimum requirement to 3.0m.



ESA Recommends

Distributors are encouraged to review their maintenance inspection practices with relation to poles steps. ESA is encouraging Distributors to include inspecting pole steps for height above the ground or surface (public safety) and the angle of bend (worker safety).

For height above ground or surface, Distributors are encouraged to identify and remove pole steps that do not meet the current version of C22.3 No.1 (minimum of 3.0m). When pole steps are removed, it is recommended to fill or plug the resulting holes (e.g., with a wood utility pole repair sealant).

For angle of bend, Distributors are encouraged to identify and remove/replace any pole step that is bent more than 15 degrees from perpendicular to the pole in any direction.