Smart PPE: Where Technology Meets Practical Protection Fatality File



Worker Suffers Severe Burns After Inadequate Arc Flash PPE

An electrical technician was performing maintenance on energized equipment inside a facility. The task required arc-rated personal protective equipment, but the worker was wearing standard work clothing that was not rated for arc flash hazards. A proper hazard assessment had not been completed, and the level of energy present in the system was underestimated.

While working inside the panel, an arc flash occurred, releasing an intense burst of heat and energy in a fraction of a second. The worker was exposed directly to the flash, suffering severe burns to the face, hands, and upper body. The injuries required hospitalization and long-term treatment. Investigators later confirmed that proper PPE selection and use could have significantly reduced or prevented the injuries.

Source: https://www.osha.gov