Tree Trimmer Electrocuted

An untrained and poorly equipped tree trimmer was electrocuted when a branch he had just cut touched an 8,000 volt power line.

He worked for a tree removal service, and was cutting down a tree in a residential back yard, near a high voltage line. The power company had not been informed of the planned work. The day was windy, wet and cold.

The worker was not equipped with insulating rubber gloves, nor was he wearing a hard hat or goggles.

Using spurs and a safety belt, he began to climb the tree, trimming branches on the way with a chainsaw.

At 24 feet, a gust of wind caught the branch he had cut and pushed it into contact with the power line.

Because of the voltage and the lack of insulating gloves, the worker was not able to immediately release the charged branch and received a massive shock.

Rescuers also endangered themselves. Police tried to climb the tree to reach the victim, and the fire department used an aluminum ladder to try to remove him. This aluminum ladder could have acted as a conductor.

This incident could happen just as easily to a home gardener trying to do some tree trimming. Get advice from the power company before attempting to do any such work. Don’t attempt this or any similar job without obtaining the correct training and safety gear. If you ever have to rescue the victim of an electrocution, do not endanger yourself as well.