

FREE SAFETY MINDER NEWSLETTER



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William E. Hering
Corporate Safety & Health
Director



Safely the Northeast's Power

As the demand for electricity increases exponentially, it is essential to maintain and upgrade the current power infrastructure. One of the most significant advances in equipment technology in recent years is SF6 high voltage circuit breakers, a key element in the transmission and distribution of power.

The previous technology utilizes air or oil to insulate breakers in power generating stations, switchyards and substations. These units can become burdensome to maintain, as oil or air begins to leak and increasingly more time and money is spent on repair. In addition, as the equipment ages and demand escalates, these units will become less reliable over time and subject to

TESTING: SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT

Replacing SF6 breakers requires more than simply removing one unit and installing another. Because we have to shut down the breaker during this process, we must take a series of important steps to ensure that back-up procedures are in place before beginning work. This controlled outage takes approximately one day to complete, but it is critical in order to keep the overall system online and operating at full capacity throughout the project.

Once the installation is complete, we must make sure it is working properly before integrating it into the system. We test it thoroughly, for example ensuring there are no gas leaks, and then put it through a comprehensive trial run. This testing process takes two to three days. We then meet with the utility and present our testing results summary. When we and the utility are satisfied with the unit's functioning, we put it back online. The preparation and post-installation testing are critical aspects of the upgrade to SF6 circuit breakers, and must be carried out with the same precision and attention to detail as the

catastrophic breakdown or failure. To prevent this, many utility companies are replacing their existing units with SF6 breakers as part of their planned maintenance.

replacement itself. At S.M. Electric, we apply the full measure of our resources and expertise to all aspects of the replacement project, another example of our commitment to service excellence and to you, the customer.



SF6 breakers are superior for several reasons. They provide the latest technology and easy access to components for maintenance and service.

Unparalleled Service and Safety



S.M. Electric has performed many SF6 circuit breaker replacements for a number of major utility companies in the Northeast, and has developed expertise and efficiency that are unparalleled in the industry. As a result of our extensive experience and commitment toward safety, we've gained a reputation as the premier electrical subcontractor in the region for this type of work, and it continues to be a primary capability as the utility industry's infrastructure ages and replacement demand increases.



The Northeast Switches Over

Most large utilities take a very proactive, methodical approach to maintaining their infrastructure, planning regular outages to replace breakers before they fail and become hazardous to the work environment or interrupt the power supply. We work with these utilities on an ongoing basis, interacting with managers, engineers and field supervisors to plan and schedule installations. Depending on the customer's needs, we can work in a number of different capacities. For some we simply perform the installation; for others we act as a turnkey contractor, hiring subcontractors and taking a supervisory role in the project. Either way, our customers have come to rely on our streamlined efficiency and commitment to service, and consequently our reputation as New Jersey's top electrical contractor has widened to include utilities in the greater tri-state area, including several large utility companies in New England. At no time is our commitment to service more evident than when a critical timeline is at hand or when an outage occurs and replacements must be carried out rapidly. While the industry average for replacing a 345KV Breaker requires a two to three week turnaround, we have been able to perform the job in eight days

when necessary. This enabled us to minimize costly unplanned outages and return plants to full capacity in record time . . . while following strict NFPA 70E Safety Standards.

It's Inevitable

As time goes on, more and more major utility companies will be replacing their existing breakers with SF6 circuit breakers. They will have to, in order to maintain the reliability of their transmission and distribution systems, and the reliability of the region's power supply as a whole. At the same time, they will benefit by reducing their maintenance costs. They will benefit further by choosing S.M. Electric, THE go-to company in the Northeast for high voltage circuit breaker installation and replacement.

A Legacy of Service



It is with great sadness that we report the passing in August of Peter V. Cheche, Sr., president and C.E.O. of S.M. Electric. He, more than anyone else, established S. M. Electric as the industry leader in service and safety, and it is through his example and guiding principles that we will remain so in the years to come.

Mr. Cheche began his career as a union electrician, joining S.M. Electric in 1946. By 1956, he had advanced to become owner, president and C.E.O, an impressive tribute to his dedication, drive and management skills. Through an unerring vision and a passion for excellence, integrity and innovation, he guided the company into a position of industry leadership, setting standards for service, safety and performance that have become industry benchmarks.

Always an innovator, Mr. Cheche helped to institute and advance programs to improve workmanship and labor relations, expand productivity and promote safety awareness. He was an extremely active and outspoken force in the vital organizations of his industry, having served as both president and governor of the Northern New Jersey chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) and earning Fellowships in the national NECA organization and the Academy of Electrical Contracting, an organization dedicated to honoring outstanding industry leaders. He was also the recipient of a 50-year pin by the electrical union IBEW, indicating 50 years of membership.

Mr. Cheche won numerous awards throughout his career, including being named Man of the Year by the New Jersey Subcontractors Association. In

addition, S.M. Electric was twice honored by the same organization as "Subcontractor of the Year", a prestigious industry accolade. And, under his leadership S.M. Electric has won many safety awards at the highest levels.

Most who knew him would agree that his contributions to the industry have been incalculable. However, to his employees and colleagues, he leaves behind more than a professional and personal legacy to be honored. He hands down a way of doing business, a philosophy of service excellence that is evident in the actions of every employee, on every job site, at all times, no matter what the challenges. We will proudly uphold, and continue to build on, the standards of service that Peter V. Cheche instituted nearly 60 years ago.

School's Open - Drive Carefully

It's the Fall and that means school is back in session. It also means children are more likely to be in and near roadways. Children will be present at bus stops, school zones and in residential areas.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children 14 years of age and under, and one-fourth of all children who die in these crashes are pedestrians. On average, one pedestrian is killed every two hours in the U.S.

Many younger children have little experience dealing with traffic situations, so the responsibility lies with motorists to watch out for kids. Use extra caution on roadways, particularly at the end of the school day, when children are preoccupied with playtime and freedom from the classroom, not with oncoming traffic.

In addition to focusing on pedestrian safety, AAA reminds parents that the safest mode of transportation for all students - both children and teens - is the school bus. If your child can ride the bus to school, encourage him or her to do so. This is particularly important for teenagers, who according to the National Research Council (NRC), account for 55% of all school-related traffic deaths. And resist the urge to drive your child to school. The NRC says adult drivers account for 20% of students' deaths on the way to and from school.

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