About NATF Redacted Operating Experience (OE) Reports

North American Transmission Forum (NATF) operating experience reports highlight positive or negative transmission (reliability or resiliency) experiences worth sharing for learning opportunities or potential trending. The overall goal is to help each other learn without experiencing the same issues first-hand. This sharing originates confidentially within the NATF membership.

Redacted operating experience reports are posted on the NATF public website to allow the NATF and its members to more broadly share information, especially safety-related alerts and learnings, with contractors and other utilities to benefit the industry at large.

The NATF member company that submitted the initial restricted distribution OE report for this topic/event has approved the NATF to issue this redacted OE report.
Topic
Climbing Pole Method Causes Injury

Description
An apprentice severely injured his right arm when he kicked out on a pole and impaled his arm on the pole-step below. He was wearing the appropriate fall-restraint equipment (FRE) at the time, and was attempting to transition over the second pole-step when the injury occurred.

Lessons Learned
- The evaluation determined that the current climbing method for transitioning over pole-steps with FRE puts the climber in a hazardous position when kick-outs occur.

Actions Taken
- An alternative method for transitioning over pole-steps will be developed and rolled out to our employees who climb wood poles.
- The new method will be incorporated into the Apprentice Climbing School.
- The rollout will incorporate measures to ensure the affected employees have a thorough understanding of the method and can demonstrate reasonable proficiency.
- Our company standards will be modified to align with our new pole-step requirement. Our overall company objective will be to reduce the number of required pole-steps in our service territory.

Extent of Condition
A bulletin was distributed to distribution managers requesting they refamiliarize their employees who climb poles with our company standard to ensure they understand when pole-steps are required. If the pole being worked on does not require pole-steps, employees are to remove them before climbing and not replace them once work is completed. If the pole being worked on requires pole-steps, the climber has the option to remove the pole-steps before climbing and replace them before leaving the worksite.