

# The Danger of Complacency

Complacency is one of the **most dangerous hazards** we face on the job. Unlike many risks in electrical utilities work, complacency **does not give a warning**. We often don't see it coming, and by the time we recognize it, an incident may already be in motion.

Complacency develops quietly. It can come from **repeating the same tasks day after day**, feeling comfortable with equipment, or believing that “nothing has gone wrong before.” Whether we are performing switching, grounding, line work, troubleshooting, or even **driving to and from the job**, complacency can put lives at risk.

In electrical utilities work, **routine can be deadly**. Electricity does not care how experienced we are or how many times we have done the task safely. One missed step, one assumption, or one shortcut can result in serious injury, fatality, or damage to equipment.

## Signs of Complacency

- Skipping steps because the task feels “routine”
- Not using PPE correctly or consistently
- Failing to perform proper job briefings
- Assuming equipment is de-energized without verifying
- Distracted driving or rushing between job sites
- Ignoring gut feelings or small changes in conditions

## Helpful tips to Prevent Complacency

1. **Treat Every Task as New**  
No two jobs are exactly the same. Conditions, equipment, and surroundings change daily.
2. **Follow Procedures Every Time**  
Procedures are written in blood. Never skip steps, even for “simple” tasks.
3. **Use Stop-Think-Act**  
Pause before starting work. Ask yourself:
  - What can go wrong?
  - What has changed?
  - What protections are in place?
4. **Conduct Thorough Job Briefings**  
Discuss hazards, roles, and emergency plans—every job, every day.
5. **Verify, Don't Assume**  
Always test before touch. Never rely on memory or past experience alone.
6. **Wear Proper PPE**  
PPE is your last line of defense. Wear it correctly and consistently.
7. **Speak Up**  
If something doesn't feel right, stop the job and say something. Safety is everyone's responsibility.

## 8. **Stay Alert While Driving**

Many incidents happen off the job site. Avoid distractions, fatigue, and rushing.

## **Final Thoughts**

Experience is valuable—but it can also lead to complacency if we are not careful. Staying safe in utilities electrical work means **staying alert, disciplined, and respectful of the hazards** every single day.

**Complacency has no warning—awareness is our best defense.**

Stay safe. Look out for one another. Not One More.

David Mize

ATK Field Safety Manager