

WAC 296-45-475 Substations. This section provides additional requirements for substations and for work performed in them.

(1) Access and working space. Sufficient access and working space must be provided and maintained about electric equipment to permit ready and safe operation and maintenance of such equipment.

Note: Guidelines for the dimensions of access and working space about electric equipment in substations are contained in American National Standard-National Electrical Safety Code, ANSI C2-2017. Installations meeting the ANSI provisions comply with subsection (1) of this section. An installation that does not conform to this ANSI standard will, nonetheless, be considered as complying with subsection (1) of this section if the employer can demonstrate that the installation provides ready and safe access based on the following evidence:

- That the installation conforms to the edition of ANSI C2 that was in effect at the time the installation was made;

- That the configuration of the installation enables employees to maintain the minimum approach distances required by WAC 296-45-325(5) while they are working on exposed, energized parts; and

- That the precautions taken when work is performed on the installation provide protection equivalent to the protection that would be provided by access and working space meeting ANSI C2-2017.

- Precaution must be taken to prevent accidental operation of relays or other protective devices due to jarring, vibration, or improper wiring.

(2) Draw-out-type circuit breakers. When draw-out-type circuit breakers are removed or inserted, the breaker must be in the open position. The control circuit must also be rendered inoperable, if the design of the equipment permits.

(3) Substation fences. Conductive fences around substations must be grounded. When a substation fence must be expanded or removed fence continuity must be maintained and bonding must be used to prevent electrical discontinuity. A temporary fence affording similar protection when the site is unattended, must be provided. Adequate interconnection with ground must be maintained between temporary fence and permanent fence.

(4) Guarding of rooms containing electric supply equipment.

(a) Rooms and spaces in which electric supply lines or equipment are installed must meet the requirements of subsection (4)(b) through (e) of this section under the following conditions:

(i) If exposed live parts operating at 50 to 150 volts to ground are located within 8 feet of the ground or other working surface inside the room or space;

(ii) If live parts operating at 151 to 600 volts and located within 8 feet of the ground or other working surface inside the room or space are guarded only by location, as permitted under subsection (5)(a) of this section; or

(iii) If live parts operating at more than 600 volts are located within the room or space, unless:

(A) The live parts are enclosed within grounded, metal-enclosed equipment whose only openings are designed so that foreign objects inserted in these openings will be deflected from energized parts; or

(B) The live parts are installed at a height above ground and any other working surface that provides protection at the voltage to which they are energized corresponding to the protection provided by an 8-foot height at 50 volts.

(b) The rooms and spaces must be so enclosed within fences, screens, partitions, or walls as to minimize the possibility that unqualified persons will enter.

(c) Signs warning unqualified persons to keep out must be displayed at entrances to the rooms and spaces.

(d) Entrances to rooms and spaces that are not under the observation of an attendant must be kept locked.

(e) Unqualified persons cannot enter the rooms or spaces while the electric supply lines or equipment are energized.

(5) Guarding of energized parts.

(a) Guards must be provided around all live parts operating at more than 150 volts to ground without an insulating covering, unless the location of the live parts gives sufficient horizontal or vertical or a combination of these clearances to minimize the possibility of accidental employee contact.

Note: Guidelines for the dimensions of clearance distances about electric equipment in substations are contained in American National Standard-National Electrical Safety Code, ANSI C2-2017. Installations meeting the ANSI provisions comply with subsection (5)(a) of this section. An installation that does not conform to this ANSI standard will, nonetheless, be considered as complying with subsection (5)(a) of this section if the employer can demonstrate that the installation provides sufficient clearance based on the following evidence:

- That the installation conforms to the edition of ANSI C2 that was in effect at the time the installation was made;
- That each employee is isolated from energized parts at the point of closest approach; and
- That the precautions taken when work is performed on the installation provide protection equivalent to the protection that would be provided by horizontal and vertical clearances meeting ANSI C2-2017.

(b) Except for fuse replacement and other necessary access by qualified electrical employees, the guarding of energized parts within a compartment must be maintained during operation and maintenance functions to prevent accidental contact with energized parts and to prevent tools or other equipment from being dropped on energized parts.

(c) When guards are removed from energized equipment, barriers must be installed around the work area to prevent employees who are not working on the equipment, but who are in the area, from contacting the exposed live parts.

(6) Substation entry.

(a) Upon entering an attended substation, each employee other than those regularly working in the station must report their presence to the employee in charge in order to receive information on special system conditions affecting employee safety.

(b) The job briefing required by WAC 296-45-135 must cover such additional subjects as the location of energized equipment in or adjacent to the work area and the limits of any deenergized work area.

(c) Nonqualified persons may only approach exposed energized electrical equipment located in substations or switch yards up to the distances set forth in Table 2, located in WAC 296-45-325, when under the direct supervision of a qualified electrical employee acting as a safety watch. The safety watch will make sure that the nonqualified person does not encroach or take conductive objects closer to exposed energized parts than set forth in Table 2, located in WAC 296-45-325.

(i) Nonqualified persons must have hazard recognition training and attend a documented tailgate meeting prior to entering the substation.

(ii) The safety watch must be a qualified electrical employee as defined by WAC 296-45-035.

(iii) The safety watch will have the responsibility and authority to monitor work on a continuous basis and/or stop work until the hazard is eliminated or protected.

(iv) The safety watch will maintain a direct line of sight and voice communications with all nonqualified persons under their direct

supervision. If the safety watch cannot meet these requirements, additional safety watches must be assigned or work must be stopped. Each safety watch will monitor no more than four persons.

(v) The safety watch will perform no other duties while acting as a safety watch.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and chapter 49.17 RCW. WSR 19-13-083, § 296-45-475, filed 6/18/19, effective 8/1/19; WSR 16-10-082, § 296-45-475, filed 5/3/16, effective 7/1/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 09-10-077, § 296-45-475, filed 5/5/09, effective 7/1/09; WSR 05-17-038, § 296-45-475, filed 8/9/05, effective 10/1/05; WSR 98-07-009, § 296-45-475, filed 3/6/98, effective 5/6/98.]