



## Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members



### Wood Pole Inspection and Testing Safety Message

Even before OSHA created 29 CFR 1910.269 Appendix D, “Methods of Inspecting and Testing Wood Poles,” it seems likely that pole inspection was a rule of thumb for many field employees. After all, they set poles and repeatedly climbed them to handle upgrades, maintenance, wood rot and decay.

Today, given OSHA regulations and the fact that pole testing and inspections are not difficult to perform, it would also seem likely that workers would adhere to these practices. Unfortunately, some employees don’t inspect a pole at all before climbing. Others believe they can easily comply with regulations by merely rapping a pole several times with a hammer prior to ascending. They have been incorrectly taught by other climbers that it’s sufficient to rap a pole and listen for a hollow sound.

In the last few years, there have been several tragic events due to rotten wood poles falling or otherwise collapsing. The root cause of these events was failure to properly inspect and test the poles prior to climbing or changing tension. It is a disturbing reality to know that skilled and qualified climbers like us would forgo a basic safety procedure such as this one.

### OSHA 1910.269 Appendix D: Methods of Inspecting and Testing Wood Poles