The Hazards of Electrical Shock

Electricity follows the easiest path to the ground. If you touch a live electrical part while you are in contact with the ground, a current passes through you to the ground, causing a shock.

Shock can cause...

- heartbeat and breathing to stop, leading to death.
- muscle contractions that result in falls, broken bones or bruises.
- severe internal and external burns.

The effects of shock depend on...

- the type of circuit.
- voltage.
- how it travels through the body.
- how long it lasts.

To prevent shock, use safe equipment such as...

- clean, dry, undamaged cord insulation.
- guards to cover energized equipment parts.
- fuses, circuit breakers and ground fault circuit interrupters to cut off power during a circuit overload or short circuit.

And safe work habits...

- Keep a distance from exposed wires or parts.
- Avoid using equipment in wet conditions.
- Always use earthed tools and earthed circuits.
- Use protective clothing and devices, such as rubber gloves, safety mats or special tools, when required.

Other Hazards