



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF MINERS' HEALTH, SAFETY AND TRAINING  
BUREAU OF COMMERCE

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ROBERT A. REINTSEMA  
Commissioner of Commerce

CECIL H. UNDERWOOD  
Governor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Inspectors-at-Large  
FROM: Ron Harris, Director *Ron H.*  
DATE: January 29, 1998  
RE: Testing of Hot Sticks

A question has been raised concerning the testing of hot sticks that are used primarily for disconnecting energized high voltage surface lines. In particular, clarification is needed to determine if a new hot stick needs to be tested initially prior to being put into service.

West Virginia Code 22A-2-40(53) states, "disconnecting or cutout switches on energized high-voltage surface lines shall be operated only with insulated sticks, fuse tongs, or pullers which are adequately insulated and maintained to protect the operator from the voltage to which he is exposed. When such switches are operated from the ground, the person operating such devices shall wear protective rubber gloves."

This portion of the code clearly requires that insulated sticks, tongs, or pullers to be maintained. In order to maintain a safety device or provide for an established level of protection you must first determine if the device meets the desired level initially. This can only be accomplished by utilizing a recognized standard of testing to certify the device at least meets the pre-established level. Once this degree of protection has been verified, then efforts can be directed toward maintaining the device.

RLH:ks