

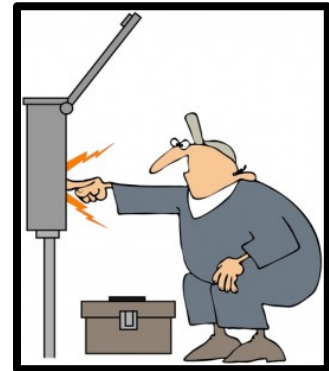
EMORY UNIVERSITY | Environmental Health and Safety Office
Research Administration

TOOLBOX TALKS

SUPERVISOR INSTRUCTIONS:

- Use toolbox trainings to encourage safety/environmental discussions during meetings with employees.

It is easy to forget that there can be electrical hazards throughout the workplace. These hazards are especially easy to overlook when you are busy or when storage space is limited. For example, electrical panels can pose a serious hazard and should never be blocked! These panels blend into the walls and are hardly noticeable. See below why electrical panel clearance is important and how to ensure your safety.



What are the hazards?

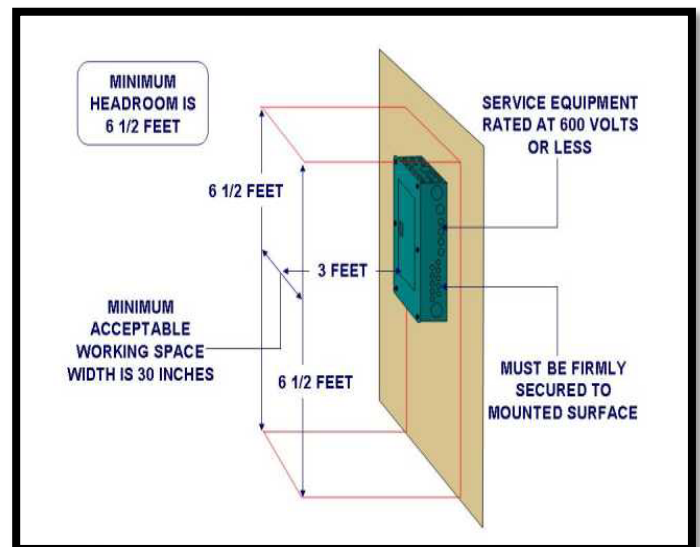
Electrical panels contain circuit breakers designed to trip and stop the flow of current to specific circuits and equipment after a fault is detected. Easy access in an emergency is critical to the protection of everyone. Blocking electrical panels can pose hazards such as arc flash, accidental fire and delayed electrical emergency response. Storing carts and combustible items in front of electrical panels can cause accidental fires or shock.

Regulatory Requirements

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Electrical Code (NEC), require that electrical panels have a minimum of 3 feet (36 inches) of clearance and a minimum headroom of 6.5 feet or the height of the equipment whichever is greater. This clearance provides a safe working distance in the event of an electrical hazard. This clearance also reduces the risk of an accidental fire caused by storing combustible items near electrical panels.

How can we protect ourselves?

Always leave sufficient clearance around electrical panels. Do not store objects or carts near the panels. Using floor marking tape around electrical panels is a great way to create a clear visual border to indicate the hazard.



SAFETY/ENVIRONMENTAL TOOLBOX TALKS – ELECTRICAL PANEL CLEARANCE

Conclusion:



If you have any questions regarding electrical safety, please contact the Environmental Health & Safety Office.

Credits

https://thatspa.co/optional_electrical_breaker_cartoon.php

<https://www.creativesafety.com/floor-marking-for-electrical-panel-compliance/>

<https://www.mysafetylabels.com/electrical-panel-labels>