



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, DC 20314-1000

01 November 2009

CESO-ZA

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL HQ Offices

SUBJECT: Significant Changes to the ER 385-1-31, Control of Hazardous Energy Regulation

1. This cover letter is accompanied by Engineering Regulation 385-1-31, *The Control of Hazardous Energy*, dated 01 November 2009. The previous (1994) version was reviewed in its entirety by a PDT. The PDT members encompassed Safety and Health professionals, craft personnel, management and electrical engineers. The ER was rewritten to reflect a shift in emphasis of the overall policy intent. While the practice of using only tag-out systems (in lieu of both lockout and tagout) has been considered an acceptable safe clearance program alternative in the past, this is no longer the case.
2. All USACE operating facilities are expected to demonstrate the consistent application of this document and by doing so, ensure tags and locks are used together as the mechanism for controlling the accidental release of hazardous energy. The practice of using only tags is now considered unacceptable except in rare instances and only when applied in accordance with this regulation.
3. A second distinct difference in this document is the more robust application of temporary protective grounding, to include positive accountability of these devices. USACE experienced an accident recently where accountability of these devices was not considered. The incident, which resulted in a large property damage incident and no personnel injuries, could have been so much worse. While still not considered a part of any individual Safe Clearance, the placement and removal of Temporary Protective Grounds is more detailed in application and process.
4. Other differences between versions will be noted by users throughout the document including alternative options and program audit requirements. Therefore it is expected that each facility review and modify their comprehensive Hazardous Energy Control Program and Local Supplement to account for the changes.
5. All USACE operating facilities are expected to immediately begin the process of complying with this regulation. A transition period of no more than two years from the effective date of this regulation may be necessary for some compliance actions if precluded by budgetary constraints and is considered acceptable before full compliance is achieved. The transition period is not intended as an interval of inactivity, however it

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is recognized that budgetary cycles, planning, procurements, fabrication of equipment and other issues will take time. Requests for variances to the transition period must be accompanied by a compliance plan, will only be considered in rare circumstances and will be subject to approval by the local SOHO and CESO. Please contact Ms. Ellen B. Stewart at (202) 761-8565 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Encl



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