

Temporary Power: Verify Before Changing Outlets

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Why this matters

Moving a tool to another outlet changes its supply. The tool running at the previous location does not prove protection at the next one.

Objective: Confirm the actual point-of-use protection before reconnecting.

Key hazards or failure points

Unknown supply; assumed GFCI protection; untraceable grounding tests; damaged leads; wet connections; repeated resetting after a trip.

Practical controls

- Follow the employer's compliant construction ground-fault protection arrangement. Workers must not informally substitute an assured grounding program for GFCI protection.
- Keep defective cords and equipment out of use. Have authorized electrical personnel resolve supply or equipment defects.
- Protect leads and connections from water, traffic and damage under equipment instructions and the site arrangement; reassess every supply change.

Verify It in the Field

Identify the actual outlet and protection with the responsible electrical person. A nearby protective device does not prove this outlet is covered.

For GFCI protection, use the specified safe manufacturer check. Under an assured grounding program, confirm applicable inspection and traceable current test evidence.

Inspect accessible disconnected equipment under the procedure and review the new route. Record supply identification, evidence, verifier and time before use.

Stop and reassess

Hold use for unknown protection, failed testing, damage, unsuitable moisture exposure or repeated trips. Keep clear and obtain electrical help; do not bypass protection, open enclosures or probe circuits.

Ask the crew

1. Which device or program protects this outlet?
2. What evidence follows the equipment to this location?
3. Who resolves a failed test or repeated trip?

Use this HOP tool — Validate assumptions: State the assumption: this new outlet has the protection our task needs. Name the evidence that would establish it and the person authorized to verify it. Keep the tool disconnected until the responsible person resolves the uncertainty under the site procedure.

Sources: OSHA 1926.404, 1926.416; DOE Vol. 2, pp. 22–23. HOP concepts adapted from DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2 (June 2009). No claim to original U.S. Government work; no government endorsement implied.

Free next step: JHA/JSA planning and field-verification worksheet

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/temporary-power-shock-protection