MANUFACTURING SAFETY ALERT

Ask Yourself
"Could it happen here?"

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Transformer SIFp - Near Miss

During startup following a maintenance weekend, a PDC fault (production upset condition) was identified on the Canter HMI. An electrician began troubleshooting and checked the voltage at the main sawmill transformer. The transformer was mistakenly believed to be a 600V isolation transformer; however, it was actually a 13.8 kV to 600V step-down transformer.

Using a hand-held multimeter, the electrician tested the transformer on the low-voltage secondary side and then attempted to test the high-voltage primary side. The transformer did not have marked voltage identification labels. The meter, which was not rated for this voltage/energy level, failed catastrophically. Fortunately, the electrician was not injured.



SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Electrical work, testing and troubleshooting must only be performed by qualified and certified electricians that are trained for the specific voltage levels involved.
- Ensure high-voltage electrical equipment, including primary and secondary sides, is clearly and correctly identified and labelled.
- De-energize and isolate equipment whenever possible before performing testing or troubleshooting.
- Restrict and control transformer access to qualified personnel only.
- Reinforce training on electrical system awareness, transformer hazards, arc-flash risks, PPE requirements, and the limitations of testing equipment, including CAT ratings.

MOST IMPORTANT TAKE AWAY

Ensure that all high voltage transformers are correctly identified and labeled.

MAG
Manufacturing Advisory Group

BC Forest Safety

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