



Laboratory Safety Committee

Electrical Safety Subcommittee

ESS D2006-6 05-Jun-2006

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ESS Determination # D2009-2 October 12, 2009

Guidelines for resetting a tripped circuit breaker, 480 volts and below

This subject was addressed in ESS Determination D2006-3 (March 6, 2006) "Does a person need to be Qualified to operate a circuit breaker." The recommendations below are an update to Determination D2006-3 and should be applied as follows:

1. The resetting of a circuit breaker at 240 volts AC and below.
2. The resetting of a circuit breaker operating above 240 volts , up to and including 480V AC.

1. Circuit breakers operating at 240 volts AC and below:

The committee decided that formal NFPA-70E training is not required to reset a 240 volt and below (typically 208v or 120v) circuit breaker ONE TIME ONLY.

An unqualified person must contact their electrical coordinator to be verbally briefed on the hazards of operating a circuit breaker and be instructed in the following PPE requirements.

- PPE Class 0 required to reset a tripped circuit breaker.
- Applies to 240 volts and below
- PPE requirements are long sleeve natural fiber shirt, natural fiber long pants, hearing protection, & safety glasses.

Always stand to the side of the panel board when resetting a breaker, not in front.

Before resetting a breaker it must be determined (at least have a reasonably good idea) if the breaker tripped due to a fault or an overload. If the cause of the circuit breaker trip cannot be determined, the load circuit must be investigated by a qualified person to determine the cause of the circuit breaker trip before the breaker may be reset. If the breaker trips a second time, the breaker must be tagged, indicating time and date of second trip. It may not be reset until the cause of the trip is determined by qualified experts.

2. Circuit breakers operating at voltages greater than 240 Volts AC but less than or equal to 480Volts AC:

The committee requires that resetting a tripped circuit breaker operating above 240 volt AC but less than or equal to 480 volts AC be done only by NFPA-70E qualified

persons. In addition, the general rule is for the duty electrician to reset a breaker that feeds other breakers or panel boards but not required to reset a breaker that feeds a single load such as a power supply. In the case of large power supplies, an expert (Knowledgeable Person) for the equipment should be called to reset the breaker (under some circumstances the equipment expert may direct a fully qualified NFPA-70 individual to reset the breaker).

Appropriate PPE must be worn in accordance with NFPA70E tables.

Always stand to the side of the panel board when resetting a breaker, not in front.

Before resetting a breaker it must be determined (at least have a reasonably good idea) if the breaker tripped due to a fault or an overload. If the cause of the circuit breaker trip cannot be determined, the load circuit must be investigated by a qualified person to determine the cause of the circuit breaker trip before the breaker may be reset. If the breaker trips a second time, the breaker must be tagged, indicating time and date of second trip. It may not be reset until the cause of the trip is determined by qualified experts.