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Permissible to Install New Conductors in a Trough with Live Conductors?

Rich Bergquist of FESS Ops asked whether or not it should be allowed to install new conductors into a trough with live conductors in it.

Such work activity was considered as allowable by the Subcommittee. More specifically, the work is not considered to be Manipulative Energized Work in that the energized conductors are insulated and there are no exposed live circuit parts that are being work on. A similar and allowed work activity would be installing new conductors or cables in a cable tray having energized conductors. Installing new conductors in a conduit containing energized conductors is not advised, though such work activity might be allowed for particular instances upon review. The work activity that Mr. Bergquist described is not necessarily without hazard. The insulation of the existing energized wires may be brittle. There may be loose splices or splice caps in the trough. Trough covers are notorious for pinching contained conductors that are not properly routed and restrained. Additional steps to protect the worker may be advised, as determined by the Hazard Analysis process.