

Subject: Occupational Safety and Health

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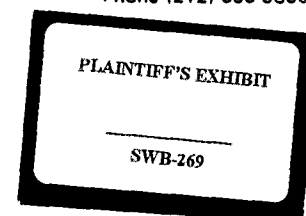
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to: Company Presidents and AT&T Vice Presidents

from: Vice Chairman

description: States System policy regarding hazards in customer premises or workplaces that could expose telephone company personnel to substantial risk of injury or illness.



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The Bell System has long accepted a basic responsibility for employee safety and health. It has endeavored to provide and maintain safe and healthful workplaces. It has provided safety devices, methods, and equipment to enable employees to perform their assigned work safely and without risk to their health. For many and obvious reasons, however, the Bell System can not readily extend these obligations, commitments, and programs to workplaces and environments which it does not own, operate, or otherwise control.

Recently, several Bell Operating Companies have been notified by customers of hazards on customer premises that could expose telephone employees to substantial risk of injury or illness. In some instances, these Companies were asked to comply with detailed safety and health regulations specifically applicable to customer premises. Included, were requirements to furnish and maintain special safety and health equipment in order to gain access and to perform work.

In responding to these issues, the Companies should undertake to assure that employees are provided with safe and healthful working conditions in all assigned workplaces and work environments. The Companies should also undertake to assure that employees conduct themselves in non-company workplaces while conducting company business so they do not constitute a hazard to non-company personnel or property. In discharging these responsibilities, the Companies should comply with all applicable provisions of Federal, State, and Local Laws and regulations that mandate standards and practices for safety and health, as well as those established by their own organizations.

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Decisions and programs for assuring safe and healthful working conditions for Company employees assigned to work in non-company workplaces should be based on provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act which assert that all employers have an obligation under law to provide and maintain a safe and healthful workplace. When advised of safety or health hazards in non-company workplaces or work operations by (1) Company employees, (2) customers, (3) other non-company personnel, or (4) signage, the Companies should:

- a. Determine if these hazards jeopardize the safety or health of company employees who must enter these workplaces to conduct company business.
- b. Determine what safety and health procedures are required to protect company employees from these hazards. In this connection, the Companies must be prepared to comply with safety and health requirements and practices more stringent than their own or those specified by the government.
- c. Assure that company work operations do not begin in hazardous workplaces or work environments until a mutually acceptable method of operation has been established.
- d. Recover the cost of any special training, equipment, or work procedures required to protect company employees who must work in hazardous, non-company workplaces and environments directly from the customers who cause these costs to be incurred.

I would appreciate your help in assuring that your people understand and support this position fully. Specific problems should be referred to our Corporate Safety and Environmental Health Staff for consultation and resolution.



J.E. Olson
Vice Chairman

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