

STANDARDS FOR SAFE POLE CLIMBING

UNSTEPPED POLES

CONTENTS	PAGE
1. GENERAL	1
2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS	2
3. PRE-CLIMBING AND POST-CLIMBING CHECKS	3
4. ASCENDING UNSTEPPED POLES	3
PREPARING TO ASCEND	3
MAKING THE ASCENT	7
COMPLETING THE ASCENT	10
5. MANEUVERING ON UNSTEPPED POLES	13
MAKING LATERAL MANEUVERS	13
MAKING VERTICAL MANEUVERS	18
6. DESCENDING UNSTEPPED POLES	18
PREPARING TO DESCEND	18
MAKING THE DESCENT	21
COMPLETING THE DESCENT	24

1.03 A number of illustrations have been provided in this section in order to clarify climbing techniques.

(a) When an illustration is provided, it always precedes the written narrative to which it pertains.

(b) Although some standards pertain to one side of the body, one foot, one hand, one Dee ring, etc, they can be applied to either the right or left side, depending on the specific case. The illustrations used to depict these standards, however, show only one side. The other side is the mirror image of the illustration shown.

(c) Where it is appropriate for additional clarification, the narrative following the illustrations will note in parentheses which side the specific illustration depicts.

1.04 It is recognized that there are many skilled and safety disciplined pole climbing employees in the Bell System. In some rare cases, the styles of some of these skilled and safety disciplined employees may not include or represent all of the standards in this section. In these instances, the techniques which these employees have used successfully for years may be acceptable for them as individuals. However, it should also be recognized that the standards in this section represent the best procedures, in terms of safety, for climbing unstepped poles, and deviation from them almost always increases the accident risk.

1. GENERAL

1.01 This section describes the universally accepted standards for climbing unstepped poles, as taught at Bell System Training Centers. It specifically covers the basic techniques to be used to safely ascend, maneuver on, and descend unstepped poles.

1.02 Whenever this section is reissued, the reason for reissue will be listed in this paragraph.

1.05 The climbing habits of employees should be evaluated by the field supervisor under actual job conditions. The employee's ability to observe, test, and adjust for or correct any hazards is to be included in the evaluation. Unsafe habits are to be corrected when detected and follow-up training is to be provided by the supervisor, when required.

NOTICE

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SECTION 620-134-010

1.06 In order for supervisors to be able to observe and correct deficiencies in an employee's climbing performance, they must have a complete understanding and working knowledge of this practice.

2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

2.01 In the contents of this section, terms describing pole climbing techniques may require clarification and, therefore, the following definitions are provided:

Ascending Foot: Foot which is moving in the direction of travel during climbing ascent.

Body Balance Maintained: The act of keeping one's balance. Not falling. To maintain body stability.

Body Weight Shifted: The act of transferring one's body weight from one foot to another, or from one foot to both feet.

Carrying Dee Ring: Dee ring on which the safety strap is carried (both snaphooks), when not in use.

Center of Pole: The heart of the pole. That point which represents the mean.

Center Line of Pole: A hypothetical line which divides a pole surface lengthwise, separating the front quarters of the pole.

Descending Foot: Foot which is moving in the direction of travel during descent.

Descending Hand: Hand which is moving in the direction of travel during climbing descent.

Gaffing Foot: (Striking Foot) The foot which drives the climber gaff into the pole surface.

High Side of Pole: Pertains to poles which lean or those that are not set at a right angle to the ground. The high side of the pole is that side which is farthest from the ground and the low side is that side which is closest to the ground.

Initial Gaffing: The first gaff penetration of a pole while ascending.

Keeper: Part of the snaphook on the safety strap. Functions as a spring-loaded latch which allows

the snaphook to be placed on and removed from the Dee ring.

Knee-Gaff-Alignment: That position when the knee and gaff are on line with the center of the pole.

Knee Locked: Referring to when the leg is fully extended and the knee is rigid or locked back to prevent the leg from bending at the knee.

Leading Foot: Foot which is foremost in the direction of travel when climbing. Applies to any act of climbing, ascending, descending, or maneuvering on.

Proper Working Length: Meaning the distance of one arms length between the employee and pole when safetied on.

Quarters: The division of the circumference of a pole into four equal imaginary parts called quarters.

Quarters, Back: Meaning the back of the pole divided into two imaginary equal parts, consisting of a left and right back quarter.

Quarters, Front: Meaning the front of the pole divided into two imaginary equal parts, consisting of a left and right front quarter.

Safety Off: When the safety strap is removed from the pole, placed on the carrying Dee ring, and is no longer supporting the body balance.

Safety On: When the safety strap is positioned around the pole, secured to both Dee rings of the body belt and maintaining body balance.

Step-Off Area: The ground area around the pole which extends not more than two normal steps from the pole.

Striking Pole: The act of the foot driving a climber gaff into the pole surface.

Trailing Foot: Foot which follows. This applies in any act of climbing, ascending, descending, or maneuvering on.

Weight Centered Side: The side on which the body weight is centered (right or left foot supporting).

3. PRE-CLIMBING AND POST-CLIMBING CHECKS

3.01 Employees expected to climb poles must be familiar with and adhere to other associated safe work practices which are covered in other sections, such as:

SECTION	TITLE
081-020-010	Safety Headgear
081-020-011	Eye Protection
081-705-101	B Voltage Tester
081-710-200	Insulating Gloves
081-720-101	Body Belts and Safety Straps
081-730-101	Climbers
620-131-010	Precautions to be Taken Before Climbing Poles
620-132-010	Testing Poles
620-135-010	Guarding Work Areas
627-295-500	Testing Suspension Strand

4. ASCENDING UNSTEPPED POLES

PREPARING TO ASCEND

4.01 In order to successfully complete a climbing task, it is necessary that climbing equipment be properly positioned, secured, and adjusted. It is also necessary that the pole and surrounding area be inspected for climbing hazards.

4.02 Preparing body belt and safety strap:



Fig. 1—Position of Body Belt and Safety Strap for Climbing

- (a) Position body belt on hips and buckle securely.
- (b) Engage safety strap on carrying Dee ring (left side Dee ring in Fig. 1).



Fig. 2—Engage Snaphook in Opposite Dee Ring

- (c) Check safety strap for proper working length.
 - Disengage top snaphook.
 - Transfer snaphook around pole.
 - Engage snaphook in opposite Dee ring.
(Right side Dee ring in Fig. 2.)

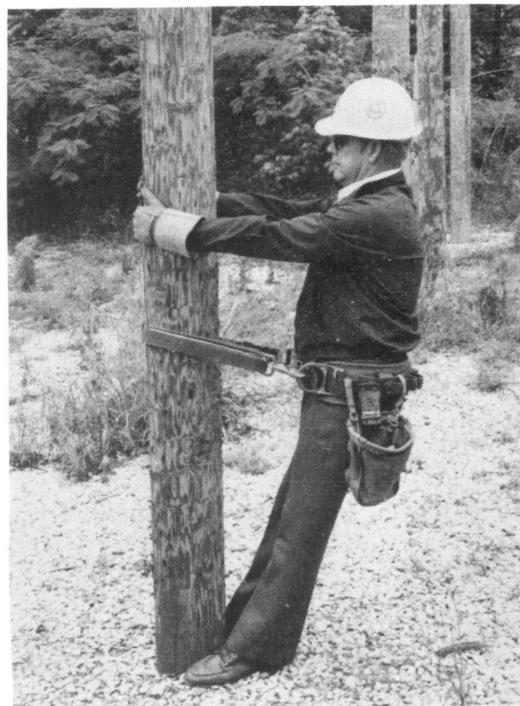


Fig. 3—Adjust Safety Strap to Working Length

- (d) Adjust safety strap length, as necessary.
 - With both feet against the base of pole and body erect, adjust the safety strap so one arms length is obtained when grasping the back of the pole.



Fig. 4—Restore Safety Strap on Carrying Dee Ring

- (e) Restore safety strap on carrying Dee ring. (Left side Dee ring in Fig. 4.)
- Stand upright with feet away from pole.
 - Disengage the snaphook from the side opposite the carrying Dee ring.
 - Transfer the snaphook around the pole.
 - Engage snaphook in the carrying Dee ring.

4.03 Preparing climbers:



Fig. 5—Attach Climbers

- (a) Place climbers on feet inside the step off area.
- (b) Position right climber on the right leg.
- Arch of boot should rest snugly over climber stirrup.
 - Climber shank should be parallel to inside of leg.
- (c) Position left climber on left leg in the manner described for the right leg.
- (d) Secure straps and buckles of climbers.



Fig. 6—Remove Gaff Guards

- (e) Remove gaff guards after placing climbers on feet.
 - Release spring with thumb.
 - Store gaff guards in pocket or pouch.

4.04 Making final preparations for ascent:



Fig. 7—Final Equipment Check

- (a) Ensure that climbing equipment is properly secured.
 - Buckles and straps of body belt, safety strap, and climbers should be engaged.
 - Climbers and body belt should be comfortably fitted and secured.
- (b) Ensure that tools and equipment necessary for the work operation are secured.



Fig. 8—Visual Inspection of Pole and Surrounding

- (c) Make a final visual inspection of the pole and work area, immediately prior to ascending. Look for climbing hazards, such as:
 - Electrical hazards.
 - Physical condition of pole.
 - Bell System and foreign attachments.
 - Other (Uneven ground at base of pole, vegetation, insects, kites, ice, etc.)
- (d) Identify the high side of pole.
- (e) Observe the climbing area.

MAKING THE ASCENT

4.05 The coordination of hand and leg movement, together with the shifting of one's body weight while maintaining body balance, is essential to develop a smooth climbing style. Paragraphs 4.06 through 4.10 illustrate these techniques.

4.06 Making initial contact:



Fig. 9—Hand Position for Initial Gaffing

- (a) Place hands at shoulder height.
- (b) Place heel of hands on back quarters of pole.
- (c) Keep wrists away from pole.
- (d) If the right foot is to make the initial gaff, raise the right hand slightly above the left hand approximately the height of the initial gaffing (as shown in Fig. 9).
- (e) If the left foot is to make the initial gaff, raise the left hand slightly above the right hand (approximately the height of the initial gaff).



Fig. 10—Inspect Gaffing Area

- (f) Inspect gaffing area for any climbing hazards.

4.07 Making initial gaffing:



Fig. 11—Position of Foot for Initial Gaffing

- (a) Raise leading foot (right foot in Fig. 11) upward 8 to 12 inches.
- (b) Center and balance the body weight over the trailing foot (left foot in Fig. 11).
- (c) Position leading foot to strike pole.
 - Aim point of gaff at heart of pole.
 - Retain point of gaff within 4 inches of pole's surface.
 - Position knee away from pole's surface and in line with gaff and center of pole.

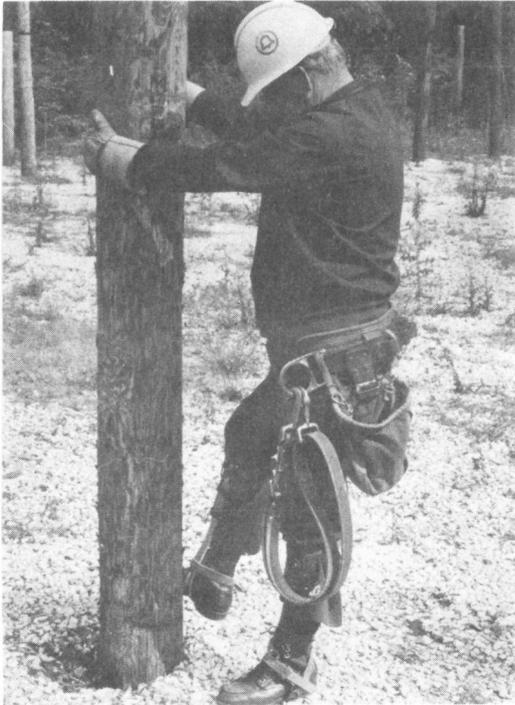


Fig. 12—The Initial Gaff

(d) Gaff pole with leading foot (right foot in Fig. 12).

— Gaff should penetrate pole surface at least 1/4 inch toward heart of pole.

— Right gaff should penetrate right front quarter of pole. Left gaff should penetrate left front quarter of pole.

— Initial gaff should enter pole 8 to 12 inches higher than weight centered foot (left foot in Fig. 12).

— Knee of gaffing foot should remain away from pole's surface.

— Gaffing foot should be at a right angle to lower leg.

(e) Maintain knee-gaff alignment

4.08 Beginning ascent sequence:

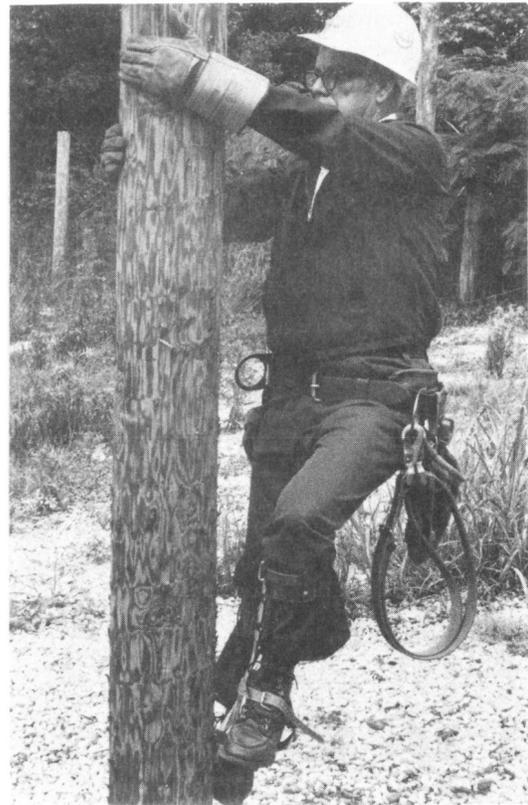


Fig. 13—The Initial Step

(a) Raise up on the leading foot (right foot in Fig. 13).

(b) Shift and center body weight over the leading foot. Lock knee back.

(c) Reposition hand opposite weight centered side (left hand in Fig. 13) one step (8 to 12 inches) upward along the back quarter of pole.

(d) Move trailing gaff (left gaff in Fig. 13) upward and within 4 inches of pole's surface.

(e) Knee on weight centered side (right knee in Fig. 13) should remain locked back.



Fig. 14—Raise Trailing Foot and Position for Gaffing

- (f) Raise trailing foot (left foot in Fig. 14) upward one step (8 to 12 inches) higher than leading foot.

Note: Trailing foot becomes leading foot.

- (g) Position leading foot (left foot in Fig. 14) to strike pole for next gaffing.

— Aim point of gaff at heart of pole.

— Retain point of gaff within 4 inches of pole's surface.

— Position knee away from pole's surface and in line with gaff and center of pole.

- (h) Visually inspect area for next gaffing.

4.09 Continuing ascent sequence:



Fig. 15—Gaffing with Leading Foot

- (a) Gaff pole with leading foot (left foot in Fig. 15).

— Gaff should penetrate pole surface at least 1/4 inch toward heart of pole.

— Right gaff should penetrate right front quarter of pole. Left gaff should penetrate left front quarter of pole.

— Gaff should enter pole one step (8 to 12 inches) higher than weight centered foot (right foot in Fig. 15).

— Knee of gaffing foot should remain away from pole surface.

— Gaffing foot should be at a right angle to lower leg.

- (b) Maintain knee-gaff alignment.



Fig. 16—Stepping Up on Leading Foot Completed

(c) Raise up on the leading foot (left foot in Fig. 16) which will break out the trailing gaff (right gaff in Fig. 16).

Note: Trailing foot becomes leading foot.

— Knee of weight supporting leg (left leg in Fig. 16) should remain away from pole and locked back.

— Weight supporting leg should be straight and in line with pole.

(d) Shift and center body weight over leading foot.

(e) Reposition hand opposite weight centered side (right hand in Fig. 16) one step (8 to 12 inches) upwards along the back quarter of the pole.

4.10 The sequences illustrated and described in 4.08 and 4.09 are repeated until the work location on the pole is reached.

COMPLETING THE ASCENT

4.11 When the working height on the pole has been attained, it is necessary to verify whether any hazards are present in the work area, to secure the safety strap to the pole, and to attain a comfortable working position.

4.12 Making work area inspection and preparation to safety on:

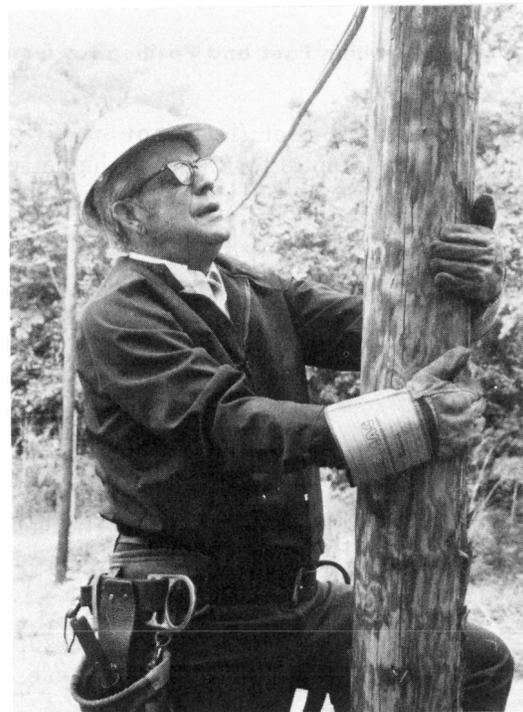


Fig. 17—Select and Inspect Location

(a) Select a safety-on location relative to the work area that is free of climbing hazards and pole obstructions.

4.13 Safetying on:



Fig. 18—Safetying on Position of Feet

- (a) Position right foot one step higher than left, if carrying Dee ring is on the left side (as shown in Fig. 18). Left foot higher if carrying Dee ring is on the right side.
- (b) Center body weight over lower foot (left foot in Fig. 18) with knee locked back.

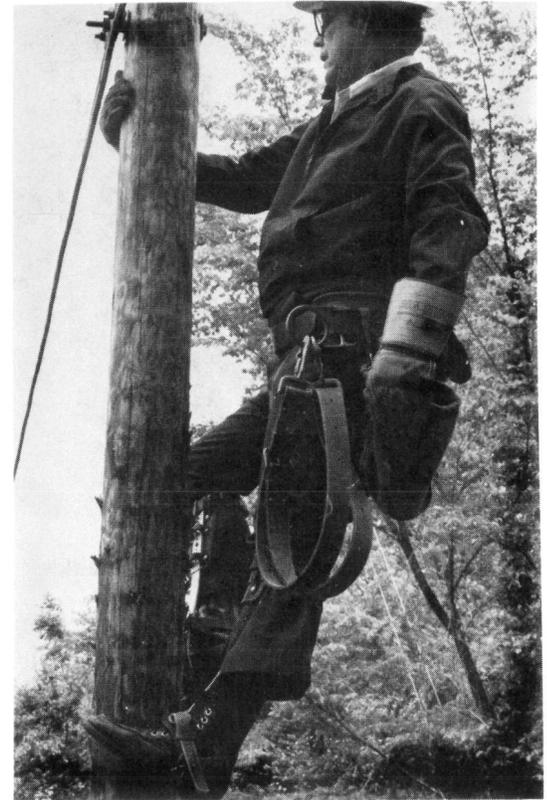


Fig. 19—Position of Weight Centered Side

- (c) Position the hand which is opposite the weight centered side (right hand in Fig. 19) at shoulder height.
 - Heel of hand should be on back quarter of pole.
 - Arm should be straight or slightly bent as necessary to keep upper part of body erect and parallel to pole.
- (d) Keep the hand which is on the weight centered side (left hand in Fig. 19) free to disengage snaphook.



Fig. 20—Disengage Top Snaphook

(e) Remove top (outside) snaphook from the carrying Dee ring (left side carrying Dee ring in Fig. 20).

- Position index finger of free hand (left hand in Fig. 20) on keeper.
- Position thumb of free hand on back of snaphook.
- Depress the index finger on the keeper as the thumb secures the snaphook.
- Release the keeper after the snaphook is removed from the Dee ring.



Fig. 21—Transfer Snaphook Around Pole

- (f) Position the hand which is carrying the snaphook (left hand in Fig.21) at least shoulder height and on the back quarter of pole.
- (g) Shift body balance to the wrist of the hand carrying the snaphook.
- (h) Transfer snaphook to fingers of free hand (opposite weight centered side) (right hand in Fig. 21).



Fig. 22—Engage Snaphook on Opposite Dee Ring

- (i) Move snaphook in position to engage Dee ring on side opposite weight centered side (right side Dee ring in Fig. 22).
- (j) Move the hip which is opposite the weight centered side (right hip in Fig. 22) closer to the pole (approximately 1/2 the distance).
- (k) Position snaphook in Dee ring with the front side of keeper touching the inside of Dee ring.
- (l) Position fingers on back of snaphook with heel of hand on outside edge of Dee ring.
- (m) Pull the snaphook (opening keeper) and engage the snaphook on the Dee ring.

4.14 Shifting weight support:

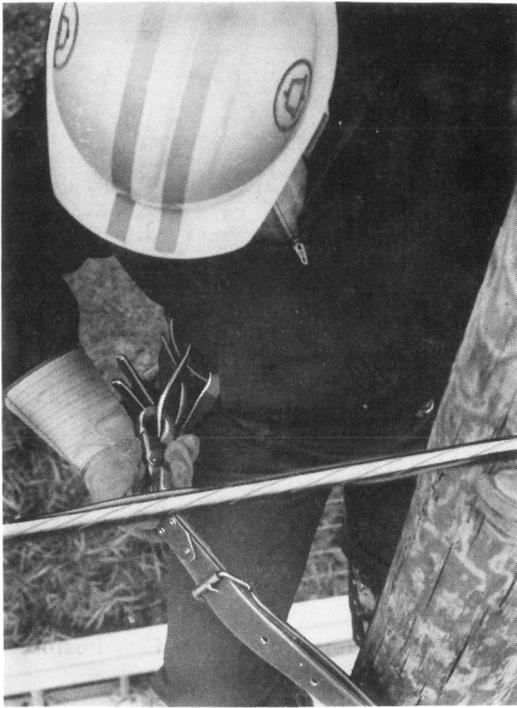


Fig. 23—Inspect Safety Strap

- (a) Visually verify that the snaphook is properly engaged.
- (b) Check safety strap for twists.



Fig. 24—Shift Body Weight Onto Body Belt and Safety Strap

- (c) Position the safety strap at belt height on the pole with the free hand (right hand in Fig. 24).
- (d) Use the hand opposite the weight centered side (right hand in Fig. 24) to grasp safety strap on the engaging Dee ring side while shifting body weight.

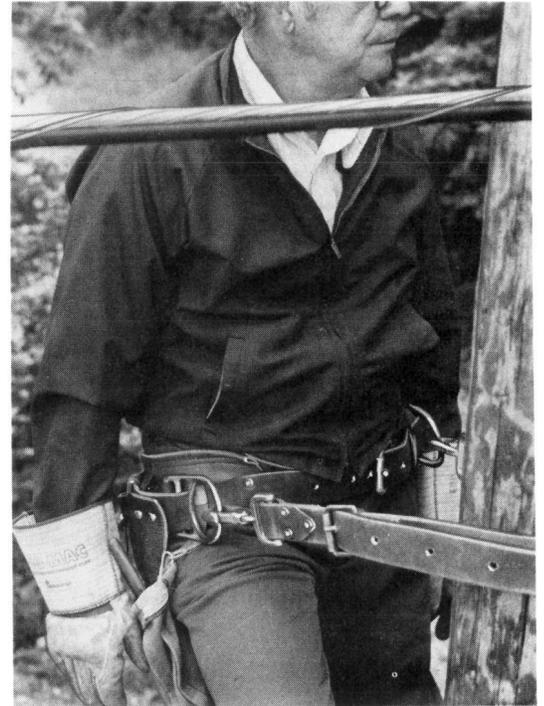


Fig. 25—Body Weight Shifted

- (e) Shift body weight to body belt and safety strap.
- (f) Free hands to perform work operations.

5. MANEUVERING ON UNSTEPPED POLES

MAKING LATERAL MANEUVER

5.01 When it is required to maneuver in a lateral direction about the pole, it is necessary to visually inspect the pole for any climbing hazards and to secure or adjust equipment prior to the maneuver.

5.02 Preparing to maneuver:

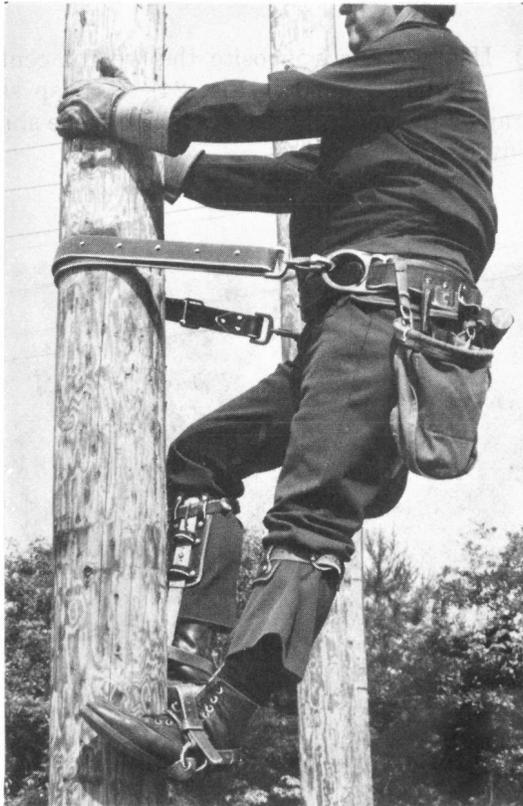


Fig. 26—Prepare to Maneuver

- (a) Visually inspect the pole for any climbing hazards.
- (b) Secure tools and materials to body belt.
- (c) Adjust safety strap to allow one arms length to back side of pole.
- (d) Position safety strap at belt height or higher for maneuver.
- (e) Keep upper body erect and parallel to pole.
- (f) Check and restore leg circulation, as described in 6.02.

5.03 Obtaining body position:



Fig. 27—Lateral Maneuver Feet Position

(a) Position feet.

— For left lateral maneuver, position left foot 1/2 step higher than right foot (as shown in Fig. 27).

— For right lateral maneuver, position right foot 1/2 step higher than left foot.



Fig. 28—Lateral Maneuver Body Position

- (b) Position hands.
- Position palm of hands flat on outside edge of safety strap with fingers and thumbs gripping inside edge.
 - Hands should secure the safety strap one-half the distance between body belt and pole.
- (c) Maintain body balance.
- Body weight should be supported by safety strap and body belt.
 - Upper body should be erect and parallel to pole.
 - Knee of weight supporting leg (right leg in Fig.28) should be locked back.
 - Maintain feet and hand positions.

5.04 Beginning maneuver sequence:



Fig. 29—Free Leading Foot for Gaffing

- (a) Free leading foot (left foot in Fig. 29) for gaffing.
- Center body weight over lower gaff (right gaff in Fig. 29) with knee locked back.
 - Move knee of leading foot away from pole, while leg is moved upward to free leading gaff.
 - Maintain body balance over lower gaff.



Fig. 30—Leading Foot Gaffing Position

- (b) Position leading foot (left foot in Fig. 30) for gaffing.

— Center body weight over lower gaff (right gaff in Fig. 30) with knee locked back.

— Raise leading foot upward approximately 1/2 distance of normal step.

— Move leading foot laterally 1/2 step away from trailing foot.

— Aim point of gaff at heart of pole.

— When moved, point of gaff should remain within 4 inches of pole surface.

— Knee of leading foot should remain away from pole surface in line with gaff and center of pole.

- (c) Visually inspect area for gaffing.



Fig. 31—Gaff Pole With Leading Foot

- (d) Gaff pole with leading foot (left foot in Fig. 31).

— Gaff should penetrate pole surface at least 1/4 inch toward heart of pole.

— Gaff should enter 1/2 step higher and away from lower weight centered gaff, but not more than 1/4 of the pole circumference away.

— Position the knee of the gaffing foot away from pole surface.

— Position the gaffing foot at a right angle to lower leg.

- (e) Maintain knee-gaff alignment.



Fig. 32—Step Up on Leading Foot

- (f) Step up on leading foot (left foot in Fig. 32).
- (g) Move hips forward, supporting body weight with hand shifting the safety strap in the direction of the lateral step.
 - Pull safety strap with the hand, gripping on the trailing foot side (right hand in Fig. 32).
 - Push safety strap with the hand, gripping on the leading foot side (left hand in Fig. 32).
- (h) Raise up and shift the body weight toward leading foot.
 - Ease back in belt and allow the body belt and safety strap to support the body weight.
 - Keep knee away from pole.
- (i) Move trailing foot (right foot in Fig. 32) upward to free gaff from pole.
- (j) Maintain body balance.



Fig. 33—Trailing Foot Gaffing Position

- (k) Position trailing foot (right foot in Fig. 33) for gaffing.
 - Do not raise the trailing foot above the heel of the leading foot.
 - Position trailing foot 1/2 step behind and 1/2 step below leading foot.
 - Shift body weight toward leading foot with the knee locked back.
- (l) Position trailing gaff to strike pole.
 - Aim point of gaff at heart of pole.
 - When moved, point of gaff should remain within 4 inches of pole's surface.
 - Position knee away from pole surface.
 - Fully extend leg along center line of pole (knee not locked).
- (m) Visually inspect area for gaffing.



Fig. 34—Gaff Pole With Trailing Foot

- (n) Gaff pole with trailing foot (right foot in Fig. 34).

- Gaff should penetrate pole surface at least 1/4 inch toward heart of pole.

- Gaff should enter pole surface within one step below other foot (left foot in Fig. 34).

- Fully extend leg with knee away from the pole's surface.

- (o) Shift and center body weight over lower gaff (right gaff in Fig. 34).
- (p) Gaffing foot should be positioned at right angle to lower leg (knee locked).
- (q) Maintain knee-gaff alignment.
- (r) Maintain body balance.

5.05 Continuing Maneuver Sequence: The sequence illustrated and described in 5.04 is to be repeated, in order, until the desired lateral position on the pole is attained.

MAKING VERTICAL MANEUVERS

5.06 Ascent: When it is necessary to ascend vertically on a pole, follow the sequences

illustrated and described in 4.08 and 4.09, in order, until the desired working position is attained.

5.07 Descent: When it is necessary to descend vertically on a pole, follow the sequences illustrated and described in 6.05 and 6.06, in order, until the desired working position is attained.

6. DESCENDING UNSTEPPED POLES

PREPARING TO DESCEND

6.01 Making predescent visual inspection:



Fig. 35—Visual Inspection of Pole and Surrounding Area

- (a) Visually inspect the pole for climbing hazards.
- (b) Select the high side of pole for descent.
- (c) Visually inspect the ground for hazards.

6.02 Preparing to safety off:



Fig. 36—Check Leg Circulation

- (a) Check leg circulation.
 - Feet and legs—Flex each limb while shifting weight to other gaff.
 - Knees—Flex or bend each knee while shifting weight to the opposite gaff.
- (b) Restore circulation, as necessary.
 - Center body weight over one gaff.
 - Remove the opposite gaff from the pole.
 - Flex or rotate limb until circulation is restored.
 - Flex or bend knee until circulation is restored.
- (c) Use same procedure to restore circulation to the opposite leg.

6.03 Safetying off:



Fig. 37—Safetying Off Feet Positions

- (a) Position right foot one step higher than left if carrying Dee ring is on the left side (as shown in Fig. 37). If carrying Dee ring is on the right side, position left foot one step higher.
- (b) Center and balance body weight over lower gaff (left gaff in Fig. 37) with the knee locked back.



Fig. 38—Safetying Off Hand Positions

(c) Position the hand which is on the weight centered side (left hand in Fig. 38) at shoulder height.

— The heel of the hand should be on back quarter of pole.

— Arm should be straight or slightly bent, keeping the upper body erect and parallel to pole.

(d) Free the opposite hand (right hand in Fig. 38) to disengage the snaphook.



Fig. 39—Disengage Snaphook

(e) Move the hip which is opposite the weight centered side (right hip in Fig. 39) closer (approximately 1/2 the distance) to the pole.

(f) Position the free hand (right hand in Fig. 39) on the snaphook.

— Face palm outward.

— Place thumb on keeper.

(g) Depress keeper with thumb.

(h) Release snaphook from Dee ring and release thumb from keeper.



Fig. 40—Transfer Snaphook

- (i) Position the hand carrying the snaphook (right hand in Fig. 40) at shoulder height on the back quarter of the pole.
- (j) Shift body balance to wrist of hand carrying snaphook.



Fig. 41—Transfer Snaphook

- (k) Transfer snaphook to fingers of opposite hand (left hand in Fig. 41).



Fig. 42—Restore Snaphook on Carrying Dee Ring

- (l) Move snaphook into position to engage carrying Dee ring (left side Dee ring in Fig. 42).
- (m) Position snaphook in Dee ring with front side of keeper touching inside of Dee ring.
- (n) Depress back of snaphook with palm of hand, between index finger and thumb, to open keeper and engage snaphook onto Dee ring.

MAKING THE DESCENT

6.04 The smooth descent is accomplished by centering one's body weight on the descending gaff and coordinating hand and leg movement until the ground level is reached.

6.05 Positioning self for descent:



Fig. 43—Descent (Starting or Continuing) Feet Positions

- (a) Center and balance body weight over lower gaff (left gaff in Fig. 43).
- (b) Position the opposite gaff (right gaff in Fig. 43) (which will become the descending gaff) one step higher than the balancing gaff.
- (c) Right gaff should penetrate right front quarter; left gaff should penetrate left front quarter of pole.

- Position knees away from pole.
- Maintain knee-gaff alignment.



Fig. 44—Descent (Starting or Continuing) Hand Positions

- (d) Position the balancing hand which is on the weight centered side (left hand in Fig. 44) at shoulder height.
 - Wrist should not touch pole.
 - Arms should be straight or slightly bent, keeping the upper body erect and parallel to pole.
- (e) Position the opposite hand (right hand in Fig. 44) (which will become the descending hand) between the shoulder and belt.

6.06 Beginning descent sequence:

- (a) Visually inspect pole for hand placement.
- (b) Reposition the descending hand (right hand in Fig. 44) one step (8 to 12 inches) below the balancing hand (left hand in Fig. 44).



Fig. 45—Free Descending Foot

- (c) Free descending foot (right foot in Fig. 45).
 - Move knee away from pole breaking out gaff.
 - Raise leg upward freeing gaff from pole.
 - Visually inspect area of pole to be gaffed.

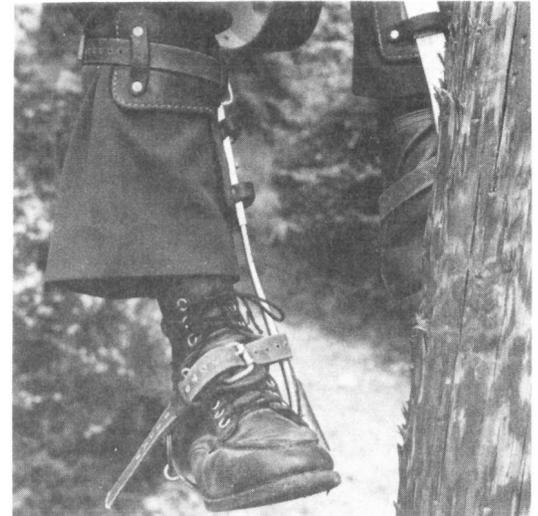


Fig. 46—Position of Descending Foot for Gaffing

- (d) Lower descending foot (right foot in Fig. 46) one step (8 to 12 inches) below weight centered side (balancing gaff) (left gaff in Fig. 46).
 - Aim point of gaff at heart of pole with leg fully extended.
 - Point descending gaff toward center line of pole, with toe turned out.
 - Retain point of gaff within 4 inches of pole surface during descent.
 - Position knee away from pole surface and in line with gaff and center line of pole.
- (e) Maintain knee-gaff alignment.



Fig. 47—Gaff Pole With Descending Foot

(f) Descending gaff (right gaff in Fig. 47) should penetrate center line of pole.

— Gaff should penetrate pole surface at least 1/4 inch toward heart of pole.

— Right gaff should penetrate right front quarter of pole. Left gaff should penetrate left front quarter of pole.

— Gaff should enter pole one step (8 to 12 inches) below opposite gaff (left gaff in Fig. 47).

— Position knee of gaffing foot away from pole surface.

— Position gaffing foot at a right angle to lower leg.

(g) Maintain knee-gaff alignment.

(h) Lock knee back.

Note: The descending gaff now becomes the weight-centered-gaff (balancing gaff) and the previous weight-centered-gaff becomes the descending gaff.

6.07 Continuing the descent: The techniques illustrated and described in 6.05 and 6.06 are to be repeated until the descending foot has gaffed the pole within the stepping-off distance from the ground level (between 8 and 12 inches from ground level).

COMPLETING THE DESCENT

6.08 Completing step-off maneuver:



Fig. 48—Inspect Step Off Area

(a) Visually inspect ground area for feet placement.

(b) The stepping off distance between the ground and weight centered foot (right foot in Fig. 48) should not be more than 12 inches.

(c) Visually inspect the pole area for placement of hands.



Fig. 49—Step Off Maneuver Hand Positions

(d) Position descending hand (left hand in Fig. 49) on pole at shoulder height as descending foot reaches the ground level.



Fig. 50—Lower Descending Foot

(e) Lower the descending foot (left foot in Fig. 50) to the ground level (not more than 12 inches).

— Keep descending leg straight, knee not locked.

— Shift and balance the body weight onto the descending foot.



Fig. 51—Complete the Step Off Maneuver

- (f) Lower remaining foot (right foot in Fig. 51) to the ground level.
- (g) Shift body weight over both feet prior to release of either hand.
- (h) Position both hands at shoulder height on pole.
- (i) Maintain body balance with hands until feet are in a stable and balanced position.

6.09 Clearing pole:

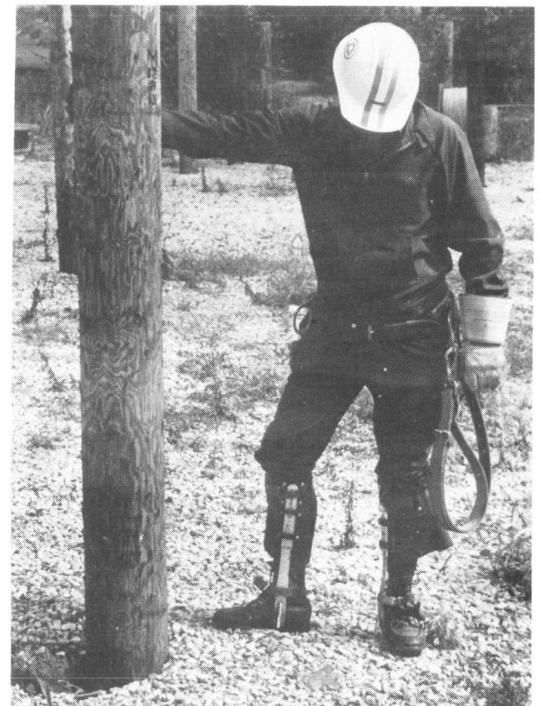


Fig. 52—Clear Pole

- (a) Remove left hand from pole when clearing to the left (as shown in Fig. 52). When clearing to the right, remove the right hand.
- (b) Inspect ground area for foot placement.
- (c) Lead with left foot when clearing left (as shown in Fig. 52). Lead with right foot when clearing right.

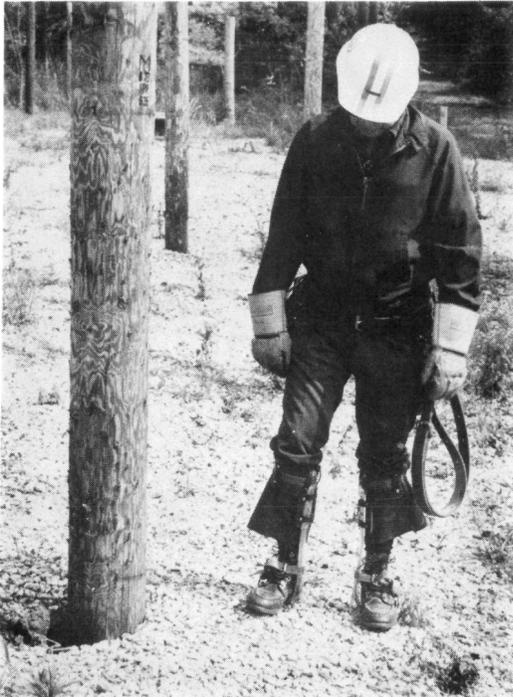


Fig. 53—Pole Cleared

- (d) Remove remaining hand (right hand in Fig. 53) from pole.
- (e) Reposition trailing foot (right foot in Fig. 53) parallel to leading foot (left foot in Fig. 53).
- (f) Stand erect to maintain body balance.
- (g) Cover gaffs with gaff guards and remove climbers inside the step off area.