

ProGARM[®]
PROTECTING LIVES

ARC FLASH INJURIES

**WHAT YOU
NEED TO
KNOW**

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SPECIALISTS**

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ARC FLASH INJURIES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

They say knowledge is power and that's certainly the case when it comes to your health and safety at work – and particularly in the case of Arc Flash injuries.

It's difficult to quantify the number of Arc Flash injuries in the UK as there is no specific category to report them. Reports to the HSE suggest around 1,000 electrical incidents take place in the UK each year, with around 30 people dying from injuries sustained as a result – mostly from contact with overhead cables. But the HSE cautions that even non-fatal shocks can cause severe and permanent injury.

ProGARM's own research identified that a staggering 57% of electrical workers had first-hand experience of an Arc Flash incident. If you were unfortunate enough to be caught in an Arc Flash incident, what kind of injuries might you receive?

WHAT CAUSES

ARC FLASH INJURIES?

An Arc Flash happens when an electrical discharge travels through the air and releases an intense burst of energy. They are often caused by inadvertent contact between an energised conductor and another conductor or an earthed surface.

Not only the person working on the equipment but also those nearby can be severely injured because of an Arc Flash incident. The main causes of those injuries are the heat generated by the incident which can also cause fires, the bright light generated by the flash, and the blast of energy itself.

ARC FLASH INJURIES THE BLAST

Depending on the energy within the Arc Flash, the blast it creates – caused by the thermal energy – can knock workers off their feet and send shrapnel flying through the air at hundreds of miles per hour.

Pressure on the chest resulting from the blast can be higher than 2,000 pounds per square foot. Not only can blast pressure directly cause damage to the body, but it can also create fall hazards.

The risks of injury related to the blast include being injured by flying debris which could lead to concussion or even brain injuries, broken bones, and hearing loss or ruptured ear drums from the sound. Noise levels created from blasts have been measured at up to 141 decibels at two feet from the source.

ARC FLASH INJURIES THE FLASH

A bright ultraviolet light is emitted when an Arc Flash occurs. This can cause what eye specialists call a flash burn – it's also known as welder's eye or arc eye as it's common in the welding industry.

Flash burns are like sunburn on the eye and, although they can heal themselves, there is the possibility of infection which would hamper recovery.

There has been much more research into Arc Flash in the US. According to the State of Washington's Arc Flash/Blast fact sheet about the aftermath of an Arc Flash: "Physically, victims may suffer from chronic pain and scarring. Workers may also have difficulty reintegrating into the community and may experience anxiety, depression, or other psychological symptoms. The social and economic costs may also be high."





PPE TO KEEP YOU SAFE FROM **ARC FLASH INJURIES**

Here at ProGARM we live and breathe Arc Flash, continually innovating and improving our range of personal protective equipment.

For a real-life example of our PPE in action watch Eddie's story here. He was wearing our PPE when he was hit by an arc flash blast. Luckily the story ends well, but as you will see, it could have been very different.



Eddie's Arc Flash Story

“SOME WORKERS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO THEIR PRE-INJURY JOB. EMPLOYERS BEAR THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH LOST PRODUCTIVITY, REDUCED COMPETITIVENESS, EMPLOYEE REHIRING AND RETRAINING, AS WELL BEING SUBJECT TO INCREASES IN WORKERS’ COMPENSATION PREMIUMS.”

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ARC FLASH MYTHS **BUSTED**

While it's difficult to eliminate the risk of an Arc Flash incident entirely, knowing the truth versus fiction can be the difference between surviving relatively unscathed, serious long term injury, and even death.

There are a host of Arc Flash myths which are bandied as truths. Anyone who has worked in environments with an Arc Flash risk knows that these flashes of intense energy are no joke.

Our myth busting guide will help you to separate Arc Flash fact from fiction. Learn the truth behind 9 of the biggest myths, allowing you to protect your teams more effectively

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