



Why Shuffle or Hop Away from Energized Ground?

First and foremost, if a live wire hits the vehicle or equipment that you are in, it is important to remember to only get out of your vehicle if it is critical to leave it, such as a life threatening situation. You are relatively safe inside your vehicle as long as you do not touch or step onto anything outside the vehicle that will provide a path for the current to flow to ground. Wait until the owner of the power system has verified that the power lines have been de-energized and grounded.

If you must abandon your vehicle because of an emergency situation such as a fire, keep both feet together and hands by your side and make a short jump from your vehicle. The goal is to ensure that your entire body clears the vehicle and that you land on your feet without stumbling. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the vehicle while you are touching the ground.

Do not take steps away from the vehicle. It is safest to shuffle away without moving your feet more than a few inches. The reason to keep your feet together is to minimize voltage difference between the two points of contact (your feet) with the ground or energized surface. Whenever there is a voltage difference between one point and another, a current will flow. It is the flow of electricity (the current) that can cause serious injury or death.

Step potential is the voltage difference between two places that are a step apart on energized ground. For example, if you are standing on energized ground, there could be a significant difference in voltage between where one foot and the other are placed, and an electric current could flow up one leg and down the other. If your feet are close together and touching, you are fairly safe. Since there is almost no voltage difference between the places your feet stand, there is little reason for electricity to seek a path through your body.

Remember: "No task is so important that it be done at the risk of Safety."