Introduction to the Course

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Investigation of Power Line Caused Wildland Fires

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Course Description

This course will provide the Wildland Fire Investigator with a basic knowledge of the specific requirements and protocols necessary to investigate wildfires caused by electric power lines and their related equipment.

Detailed sections will provide specialized information and techniques to aid in the investigation of power line related wildfires.

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Introduction to the Course (Cont’d)

Course Objectives
1. The student will be able to describe the basic structure of the electric utility industry.
2. The student will be able to describe how to safely work around power lines and their related equipment during fire investigations.
3. The student will be able to recognize the different classifications of electrical lines, hardware, and their associated equipment, including exempt and non-exempt models and related clearance requirements.

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Course Objectives
4. The student will describe construction requirements, industry standards, and maintenance procedures required to prevent wildfire starts from electrical power lines and power line related equipment.
5. The student will be able to recognize the various power line fire causes and evidence associated with these causes.
6. The student will be able to properly collect power line caused wildfire evidence and obtain necessary records and other documentary evidence from appropriate sources.

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Course Objectives

7. The student will understand the conditions when “spoliation of evidence” may occur and how to avoid this situation.
8. The student will understand the provisions of negligence and negligence per se.
9. The student will have an understanding of the conditions whereby they may be required to provide deposition and court testimony related to their investigation of power line cause wildfires.

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Student Performance Objectives

1. Recognize why safety in power line fire investigation is the number one priority.
2. Describe an electrical utilities’ structure.
3. Describe the different types of power lines and related equipment systems and how they may be involved in wild land fire ignitions.
4. Describe electrical sub-stations and their potential for wild land fire ignitions.

Make the following Key Points:

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Student Performance Objectives

5. Describe the different types of exempt and non-exempt electrical hardware and how they may be involved in wild land fire ignitions.
6. Identify the various operations associated with power line right-of-way maintenance and their potential for wild land fire ignitions.
7. List the types of records available for a power line related wildfire investigation.
8. Identify the steps involved in preparing a power line fire investigation case report.

Continue with the Student Performance Objectives:

5. Describe the different types of exempt and non-exempt electrical hardware and how they may be involved in wild land fire ignitions.
6. Identify the various operations associated with power line right-of-way maintenance and their potential for wild land fire ignitions.
7. List the types of records available for a power line related wildfire investigation.
8. Identify the steps involved in preparing a power line fire investigation case report.

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Knowledge Check

This course will require the participants to accomplish several Performance Objectives. One of the Performance Objectives was to:
A. Keep the instructor on track and not tell too many “war stories”
B. Stay awake and focused on the lessons being provided
C. Promote to your next pay level after completing three successful power line fire investigations
D. Identify the steps involved in preparing a power line fire investigation case report

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Introduction to the Course (Cont’d)
The Correct Answer is:

D. Identify the steps involved in preparing a power line fire investigation case report

TRANSITION to Introduction to the Electric Utilities