

WEEKLY TODAY'S NON-STOP SOURCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

# Contractors

JUNE 30, 2017

## HOT LINE®



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► Cover Photo Courtesy of Sigalarm

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AEM supports safety awareness year-round by offering an extensive array of safety products, including safety manuals and videos, with major equipment types covering aerial, agriculture, compact/portable, earthmoving, forestry, lifting, road paving and utility excavation applications.

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Sigalarm is frequently referred to as the Coca-Cola® of proximity alarms. To this day customers worldwide continue to add value to their operations by incorporating Sigalarm products into their safety plans.

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June is National Safety Month and AEM has partnered with *Contractors Hot Line* to bring you information, education and ideas to keep your workplace, your jobsite and your workforce safe.



**ON THE COVER**  
 Cover photo courtesy of Sigalarm.

Sigalarm proximity alarms detect and warn of dangers or closeness to overhead energized power lines. We're in the business of saving lives... for over 50 years.

**For more information,**  
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# WE'RE IN THE BUSINESS OF SAVING LIVES!

| By Lance Burney, CEO/Owner of Sigalarm

**S**igalarm is frequently referred to as the Coca-Cola® of proximity alarms. When my wife Kim and I purchased Sigalarm in 1999, we had an opportunity to grow a strong brand that had already been providing protection to workers since the 1960's. To this day customers worldwide continue to add value to their operations by incorporating our products into their safety plans.

## We often see two types of scenarios:

The first scenario is a company that is a proactive safety conscious leader in their field and adds proximity alarms as another tool to prevent unintentional power line contact. Safety does pay, and our largest customers utilize their investment in safety to win contracts.

The second scenario is a company that calls after an accident and needs to immediately fix the problem. Unfortunately, the damage has been done. We strive to help companies like this understand the dire situation of not having adequate proximity protection. While we are happy to help any company implement better safety programs, we ultimately hope to reach these organizations prior to any such accident.

In the past Sigalarm has sold itself based on word of mouth, customer referrals, and limited marketing at trade shows. However, in order to save as many lives as possible by reaching a broader market, we have hired a leading mar-



keting agency. Energyhill was chosen based on several factors to help Sigalarm get the word out. By utilizing the latest technologies including social media, SEO content, traditional print, and redesigned trade show campaigns, Energyhill has significantly increased our base. Since hiring this agency, we have seen an increase in sales, more website traffic, and added new waves of social

media followers.

Sigalarm's growth has been steady since 1999. Despite challenges in the economy, our brand has remained strong and reliable. We have been able to cross over into many non-construction markets. Sigalarm is used on a majority of TV news vans across the country, including ABC, NBC, CBS, and others. Thanks to new energy

## Why wouldn't a company want to provide themselves with a technological safety net?

policies, a strong emerging market is the pipeline industry. Each year we are amazed to see the endless growth in applications for proximity alarm use.

Our brand is highly reputable and trusted. It is proven and documented throughout over 50 years in business that Sigalarm products do in fact aid operators in preventing power line contacts. Most of our customers verify this by the long-term relationships they have kept with us. Our best success story is the list of repeat customers we protect again and again. We are humbled and honored to be able to claim many of the largest companies in the USA as our clients.

While Sigalarm remains the leader of the industry, we are not alone in the market. The proximity alarm market has several new startup companies worldwide, hence the need to start the process of creating an international Proximity Alarm Standard. There are at least nine companies in the market with at least 15 US patents filed. The ASTM standard for the manufacturing of High Voltage Proximity Alarms is in development. The new ASTM work item (WK49653) focuses on proximity alarm manufacturing, and the latest draft is being reviewed at this time. This proposed F18 ASTM standard will set the ground work for any future "in use" standards. It has been a pleasure to work with an international standards organization such as ASTM who utilizes the expertise of



over 30,000 members to create consensus and improve performance in manufacturing and materials, products and processes, and systems and services.

The ASTM standards will build upon the work that was started by OSHA. In 2003, a cranes and derricks committee (CDAC) formed to make recommendations to OSHA regarding new safety regulations. Based on CDAC's findings, the OSHA published final

rule (known officially as 29 CFR 1926 Subpart CC) includes the option for proximity alarm use. In the meantime, we continue to develop our technology.

We are excited to launch the new GEN 4 wireless systems which will have IP rated control module enclosures as well as being 100% produced in the USA. All Sigalarm products are now proudly made in the USA, including our legacy hardwired systems. This ensures faster availability and better quality control.

Sigalarm products have always had the ability to stop the movement of equipment when the alarm is activated. This feature can be utilized on equipment like excavators, pump trucks, man baskets, drill rigs and the like. This auto-shutdown feature is the ultimate shield of protection.

One of our goals is to educate the public on the need for proximity alarms. Educating the public on differences between E-field detection and distance measurement has not been historically understood. E-fields are relative to voltage; the closer you are to the line, the stronger the E-field. Likewise, the further you move away, the weaker the E-field becomes. Since power



line contact is a known hazard and E-fields are a measurable science, proximity alarms offer the best operator aid in the most common equipment operations. The illustration to the right clearly shows an example of E-field strengths relative to varying distances from a single 350KV set of overhead power lines. The E-field values are represented as V/M.

Another difficulty in assessing power line hazards and proper avoidance measures is the inconsistencies of required distances between countries, controlling entities, utilities, standards, and regulators such as OSHA. For example, an excavator's minimum approach distance (MAD) is at 10ft. whereas a crane's MAD is 20ft. from the same 50KV line. The original intent of all guidelines is to avoid power line contact, and the use of proximity alarms preserves the original intent regardless of the method.

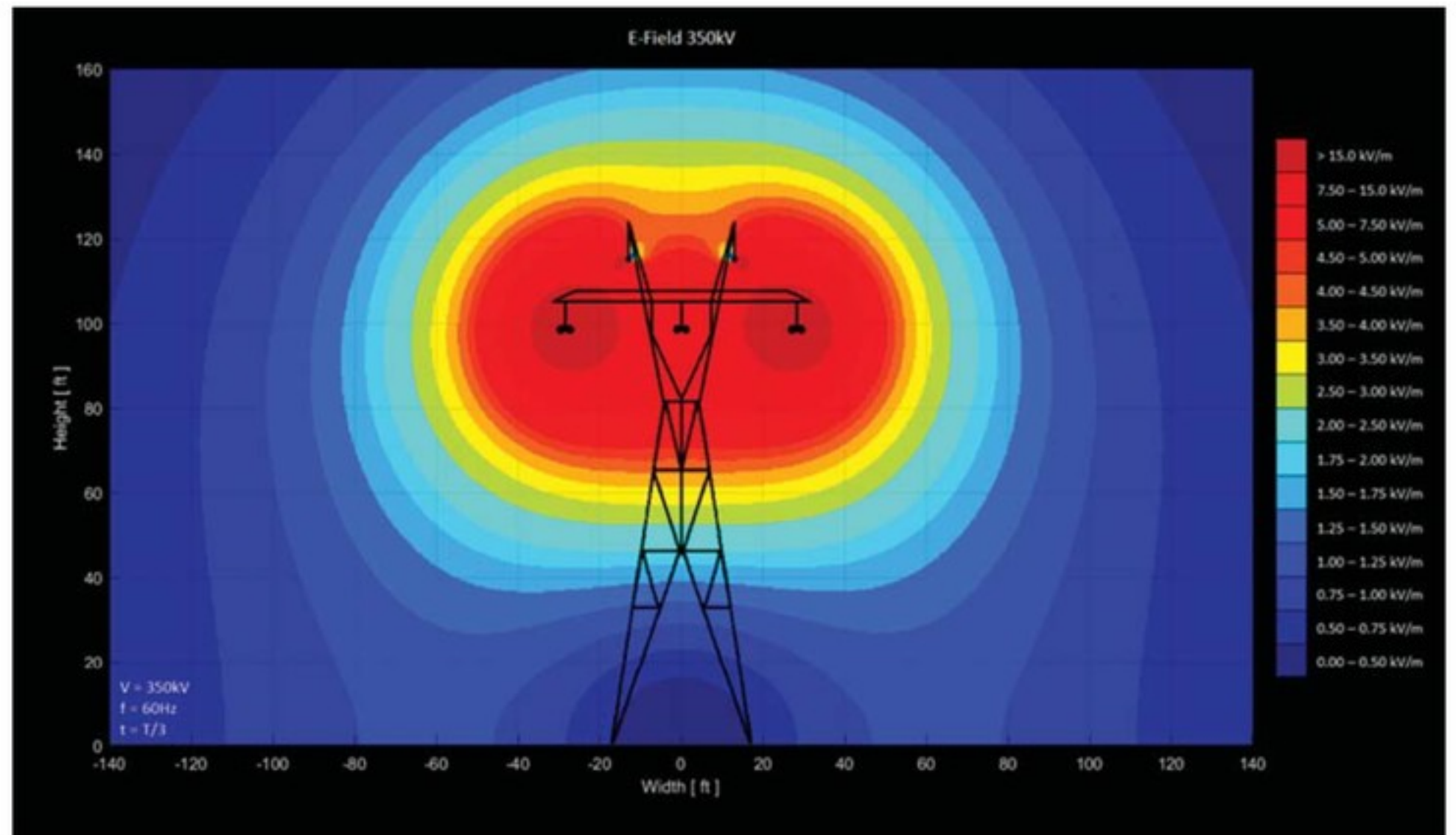
Studies have shown, it is nearly impossible for humans to judge accurately by eye the distance between equipment and power lines, and yet this is still the most commonly used method of protection. This method has not been properly studied for reliability. Imagine how hard it would be for a spotter sweltering in the Arizona desert, or worse, trying to cope with an Alaskan snowstorm. Even without these extremes, crews often have to work at night or in the blinding afternoon sun. Also, we would be remiss not to bring up modern human challenges with social media, texting, or cell phones. Added to ageless issues that distract the mind of any employee, the bottom line is humans are not 100% reliable.

A Sigalarm proximity alarm has the sole task to detect and warn of dangers or closeness to overhead energized power lines. No studies suggest other options are better than a proximity alarm, and there are no regulations prohibiting their use. We support the idea of utilizing as many layers of protection as possible. Why wouldn't a company want to provide themselves with a technological safety net?

The record of actual absence of power line contact with equipment utilizing Sigalarm products is a true measure of reliability and effectiveness. The bottom line is that if you would like to avoid power line contact, use a proximity alarm!

Sigalarm is a proud member of AEM (Association of Equipment Manufacturers), which connects us with other equipment manufacturers around the world.

With basic education to the public and your commitment, we can reduce accidents. Please contact Sigalarm (1-877-217-7752) for more information on how we can work together to save lives. ■



This is a representation only - All E-fields are not the same and can vary greatly depending on several factors.



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