

Electrical transformer and switchgear preventative maintenance

Some businesses require additional electrical components such as step-up or step-down transformers and switchgear to manage the incoming electrical power. Some of these components require periodic maintenance while others require little or no maintenance. Here are some best practices for proactively managing your electrical systems.

Sealed, floor-mounted transformers

These components generally do not need periodic maintenance. However, to *maximize* efficiency and prolong the life of the transformer, the following should be considered:

- Keep the exterior of the transformer clean of dust and debris.
- Keep a 36-inch clearance around the transformer.
- Keep combustible and flammable materials away from the transformer.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations, if maintenance is required.

Electrical switchgear

Manufacturer maintenance recommendations may or may not recommend a maintenance frequency. The 2001 InterNational Electrical Testing Association (NETA) may be a resource for you along with the National Electric Code (NEC). If your switchgear requires periodic maintenance, you should develop a comprehensive maintenance action plan. Prior to any outage or maintenance you should:

- Review your equipment history. Have there been failures?
- Review all drawings and the manufacturer's instruction manual.
- Perform visual inspections and other testing prior to maintenance.
- Develop a specific work plan and maintenance schedule.
- Conduct pre-work safety briefings with all personnel involved.
- Follow all lockout/tagout precautions.
- Perform maintenance on any electrical system, using only qualified and trained personnel.

This form, supplied by United Fire Group, merely provides minimum guidelines for you to follow and may be utilized as a tool for fact-gathering purposes to assist in your investigation. The information requested above is not exhaustive and you should, at your own discretion, request any necessary additional information as the specific situation may warrant.