BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

C.J. MANTHE
Director

STATE OF NEVADA

RAY FIERRO
Administrator

JESS LANKFORD
Chief Administrative Officer

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY
DIVISION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

October 24, 2018

Mr. Tanner Garfield
Hadfield Building Corporation
5150 South Fort Apache Road
Las Vegas, NV 89148

RE: 29 CFR 1926.451(f)(6) – Minimum Clearance Between Scaffolds and Power Lines

Mr. Garfield:

This letter is in response to your email to Tristan Dressler, Compliance Supervisor with Nevada OSHA, dated October 24, 2018. In your email, you provided several pictures and a description of site conditions at a commercial construction project you are supervising in Las Vegas, and requested an opinion from Nevada OSHA regarding the potential hazards related to the erection and use of scaffolding on your site. The pictures you provided showed uninsulated electrical distribution lines in close proximity to the north-facing elevation of your project. Based on your measurements, the power lines are within 12 feet of the face of the building. You further explain that if you were to install scaffolding for the purpose of exterior building finish work at the location in question, you estimate the scaffold would fall within 8 feet of the power lines.

As you know, OSHA's construction safety standards regulate the use of scaffolds in the construction industry, including minimum standards related to the erection and use of scaffolds in proximity to power lines. The regulatory requirements of 29 CFR 1926.451(f)(6) provide specific minimum safe working distances from energized power lines, based on the nominal voltage of the lines. The standard provides three options for conditions as you've described.

1) For all uninsulated lines operating at a voltage less than 50 kv, you may erect and use scaffolding so long as the minimum distance remains at least 10 feet away from the lines.
2) For all uninsulated lines operating at more than 50 kv, you may erect and use scaffolding so long as the minimum distance of the scaffolding and any conductive materials on the scaffolding remain at least 10 feet plus 0.4 inches for each 1 kv over 50 kv.

RENO
4600 Kietzke Lane,
Building F-153
Reno, NV 89052
(775) 688-3700

LAS VEGAS
3360 West Sahara Avenue
Suite 200
Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 486-9020

3) If you are unable to maintain the safe working distances listed above, and you wish to erect and use scaffolding, you must notify the utility company or system operator, and may not commence work until the utility or system operator has deenergized the lines, relocated the lines, or installed protective coverings to prevent accidental contact with the lines. (https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.451)

The conditions noted at your site require consideration of the requirements listed above to maintain compliance with OSHA's regulations. Thank you for your inquiry. If you need further clarification on this subject, please contact my office in writing at our Las Vegas address, listed below. You may also find the services of the Safety Consultation and Training Section useful. SCATS provides free compliance assistance services and training to employers throughout the state. You can find out more about SCATS services at their website, https://www.4safenv.state.nv.us/

Sincerely,

Jess Lankford
Chief Administrative Officer
Nevada Occupational Safety and Health Administration