

NFPA 70 2026 Edition – What about Arc Flash?

What changes pertaining to Arc Flash are in the new edition of the National Electrical Code

NFPA 70 *National Electrical Code*, 2026 edition has been approved as an American National Standard on September 9, 2025. This edition strengthens requirements for assessing and identifying arc flash hazards. This edition is expected to be printed and available for purchase in October 2025.

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Where are we now?

Existing editions of NFPA 70 identify requirements to warn personnel of electrical hazards such as arc flash and electrical shock. Either the incident energy analysis method directed by IEEE 1584 or the NFPA 70E Arc Flash PPE Category Method aka “Table Method” can be used to determine arc flash hazard severity.

The current 2023 edition requires service equipment and feeder supplied equipment rated 1,000 amps or more and likely to require examination, adjustment, servicing, or maintenance while energized to be marked to warn qualified persons of potential electric arc flash hazards. These labels are to include voltage, incident energy level, arc flash boundary, and minimum PPE requirements.

For other feeder supplied equipment the use of generic labels is “quick, cheap, and easy” leading workers to utilize the PPE Category Method. This method has been found to be difficult and prone to misapplication.

⚠ WARNING

Arc Flash Hazard.
Appropriate PPE Required.
Failure To Comply Can Result in Death or Injury.
Refer to NFPA 70 E.

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What Changes?

The 2026 Edition will adopt language currently in NFPA 70E, *Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace*, and require arc flash hazards be determined for all necessary equipment and permanent labels applied. No longer may a generic warning label require persons to manually determine hazards before performing each task.

Now, an upfront analysis is required, and arc flash hazard information must be marked on all necessary equipment. This method will help to ensure competent electrical systems experts perform the analysis, increasing the accuracy of arc flash hazard severity determination and increasing safety precautions.

Once completed, maintenance, electricians, and other qualified personnel will no longer be required to “guess” as to the hazard exposure nor to utilize the “Table Method” to determine necessary PPE. Overall, electrical safety increases and the time spent to safely perform ongoing electrical tasks should be reduced.



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What does a Compliant Label look like?

The 2026 Edition requires the following information:

- (1) The nominal system voltage
- (2) The arc flash boundary
- (3) The available incident energy or minimum required level of personal protective equipment
- (4) The date the assessment was completed

A core deliverable of TSG's arc flash analysis is the application of compliant labels to your equipment. Our labels are intended to remain concise and formatted to allow persons the ability to rapidly determine electrical hazards at equipment.

 WARNING			
Appropriate PPE Required			
ARC FLASH		ELECTRICAL SHOCK	
Incident Energy	6.84 cal/cm²	System Voltage	240 VAC
Working Distance	@ 18 in	Glove Class	00
Arc Flash Boundary	53 in	Boundaries	
Site PPE Level	Level 2	Limited Approach	42 in
		Restricted Approach	12 in
PNL-MAIN 002_1_0 2025 Analysis (844) 321-3869 - www.thompsonsolutionsgroup.com			
			

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Other Standards / Considerations

When applying labels or engraved tags it is critical that industry best practices and consensus standards are followed. It is strongly encouraged that ANSI Z535.4 is utilized for all such efforts. This document identifies font types and size necessary to ensure visibility at various distances. It further identifies standard color codes, action words, etc. to be utilized for CAUTION, WARNING, and DANGER labels as well as informational type labels/tags. This directly applies to electrical hazard or "arc flash" labels.

Another key element is the naming of equipment. At times, less than desirable names exist. In some cases, naming conventions have been implemented but not consistently or not to all equipment. Poor equipment naming negatively impacts efforts such as arc flash analysis labeling, lock-out-tag-out systems, and asset management.

Good efforts should be made to implement a clear naming convention throughout the electrical system allowing arc flash hazard labels and other endeavors to best function. Check out TSG's own Jason Moore's article *Equipment Identification and Hazard Labeling: The First Steps in a Safe Work Environment* for more information.

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References

- [1] NFPA 70-2026, *The National Electrical Code*
- [2] NFPA 70E-2024, *Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace*
- [3] IEEE 1584-2018, *Guide for Performing Arc Flash Hazard Calculations*
- [4] ANSI Z535.4-2011 (R2017), *American National Standard for Product Safety Signs and Labels*
- [5] Electrical Safety in the Workplace magazine Fall 2023 pages 10-13, *Equipment Identification and Hazard Labeling: The First Steps in a Safe Work Environment*

About Thompson Solutions Group

With offices in three states, Thompson Solutions Group provides electrical safety, electrical construction, automation, life safety, HVAC, mechanical, architectural sheet metal, plumbing, and technology, along with other services to help our customers operate their facilities more efficiently and to maintain compliance. Safety is given the highest priority at Thompson Solutions Group.

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Contact Thompson Solutions Group to learn more about how our Electrical Safety team can improve electrical safety at your facility ensuring compliance. We strive to be Your Partner in Electrical Safety!

