



Interpretation

Section 38. Equipment

Rule 384C Grounding and bonding (2007 Edition, page 243) (29 October 2008) IR553

Rule 384C reads: “Bonding should be provided between all aboveground metallic power and communications apparatus (pedestals, terminals, apparatus cases, transformer cases, etc.) that are separated by a distance of 1.8 m (6 ft) or less. For the purpose of this rule, pole grounds are not considered an aboveground metallic power apparatus and therefore not required to be bonded to the communication apparatus.”

Does this rule imply that a communications pedestal (typically grounded) or a transformer case within 1.8 m (6 ft) of a vertical pole ground is not required to be bonded?

Discussion: The second sentence appears to be in conflict with Rule 097G and Rule 099C, which require that all separate electrodes be bonded together. Aboveground communications apparatus (such as pedestals and housings) are typically grounded. Thus they have a grounding electrode. The vertical pole ground terminates at a grounding electrode (ground rod). If these are within 1.8 m (6 ft) of each other they must be bonded in order to minimize a voltage difference between them.

A vertical pole ground within 6 ft of an aboveground metallic apparatus presents the same hazard as two aboveground metallic apparatus separated by less than 6 ft. Common bonding between communications and power apparatus, and including pole grounds, helps to reduce potential differences between metallic parts that could be touched simultaneously. Common bonding is necessary for personnel safety.

Interpretation

The Interpretations Subcommittee has considered the subject Interpretation Request for Rule 384C and has developed a consensus report as follows:

“Rule 384C does not require bonding of either communication pedestals or transformer cases to pole grounds. As the rule states, pole grounds are not considered to be metallic power apparatus. Please note that while bonding is not required, it is not prohibited.

As additional information and not as part of this official interpretation, this question has been referred to the appropriate technical subcommittees for review and action, as applicable.”

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