

INSULATING RUBBER BLANKET DESCRIPTION, MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION

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1. GENERAL

1.01 The care, maintenance, and inspection requirements of the insulating rubber blanket are described in this section.

1.02 This section establishes the minimum number of insulating rubber blanket(s) that are required to be carried for safe work practices in each of the following categories of work vehicles;

- All powered personnel lifts
- Digger/derricks and cranes
- Supervisor work vehicle
- Cable placing/removing support vehicles

1.03 The insulating rubber blanket is intended to be used as a temporary insulator for worker protection against electrical shock if contact is accidentally made with power supply circuits during an aerial plant construction and/or maintenance work operation. See Section 621-205-010PT for insulating blanket use.

1.04 The insulating rubber blanket is rated for 20 Kv. However, the insulating qualities of the blanket are reduced when the blanket is wet. For this reason, insulating rubber blankets shall not be used during periods of rain or used to cover pockets of water on the ground that surround operating equipment used around power supply circuits.

1.05 The insulating rubber blanket is not a substitute for insulating rubber gloves. **Insulating rubber gloves shall always be used in conjunction with the use of the insulating rubber blanket.**

1.06 When using an insulating blanket as a mat, care must be taken not to place it directly on sharp gravel, glass, or any other sharp object or debris that may cut the blanket. Cuts can also reduce the insulating qualities of the blanket. Either sweep the area clean where the blanket is to be placed or place boards down on the area, before placing the blanket down.

Proprietary Information

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2. DESCRIPTION

2.01 The insulating rubber blanket is made of rubber, in black, flat, flexible one piece sheets that contain neither beaded edges or eyelet's. The blanket is approximately 36 inches square, 1/10 of an inch thick and weighs approximately 7 pounds. The electrical, weather, and chemical resistance qualities of the blanket are very good.

2.02 A watertight blanket canister is provided for the carrying and storage of the blankets.

Each canister can carry up to four (4) insulating rubber blankets. The canister also protects the blanket(s) from contact with other sharp or pointed tools, and other damaging objects. It is essential that all insulating rubber blankets be stored in the canister until needed.

2.03 If more than one blanket is to be placed in a canister, roll up the first blanket and place it into the canister. Then roll up each additional blanket one at a time and place them, one at a time, inside the blanket previously place in the canister.

2.04 Each blanket is marked with a rubber stamp imprint "Return for Test" date. The blankets are to be returned to the company designated agent who will be responsible for the testing and validation of the blanket's insulation properties. The blankets will need to be returned to the testing agent before the indicated "Return for Test" date has been passed. Replacement blankets can be made available, but only if the sending organization plans accordingly.

3. INSPECTION

3.01 Insulating rubber blankets shall be inspected visually for cracks, cuts, tears, or other mechanical damage each time and before it is to be used. The following steps describe the inspection procedure;

(1) Check the "Return for Test" date on the blanket. If the indicated date has not been passed, the blanket may be used. If the indicated date has been passed, the blanket should be sent out for re-testing before it can be used. **Outdated blankets shall not be used.**

(2) Place the blanket on a clean, flat surface and roll it up tightly, beginning at one corner of the blanket. As the blanket is being rolled up, observe the rolled surface for cracks or other defects. If any defects are found, the blanket must be removed from service and replaced.

(3) Unroll the blanket and repeat step (2) above but beginning the roll of the blanket from a different corner located at a right angle from the original corner.

(4) Inspect the reverse side of the blanket by unrolling it, turning it over and repeating steps (2) and (3).

3.02 Insulating rubber blankets that have punctures, holes, cuts, scratches, or cracks deeper than 1/2 the thickness of the blanket in any place but the edges shall be removed from service and replaced.

3.03 Blankets shall be returned for periodic electrical tests as indicated by the "Return for Test" marking on each blanket. The blankets should be rolled tightly (3 1/2 inch diameter) and properly wrapped for shipping to avoid damage.

4. MAINTENANCE

4.01 Upon completion of a work operation using an insulating rubber blanket, the blanket will need to be inspected for damage, cleaned and dried prior to storage. All mud, dirt and debris must be washed off with water and a mild soap. Care should be taken to not wash off the "Return for Test" date marking. **Do not use any flammable fluid as a cleaning agent.** All imbedded material such as dirt, wood splinters, etc., shall be removed. Blankets shall be thoroughly dried before placement into it's storage canister.

4.02 An insulating rubber blanket which has been found to have a cut, tear, or puncture at one edge may be treated in the following manner:

- (1) Place the blanket on a flat surface. Draw a straight line across the blanket approximately 1/4 inch from the rupture and parallel to the edge which will result in the least loss of blanket material when removing the damaged portion.
- (2) Measure from this line the length of the remaining blanket. If the measurement is less than 29 inches, the blanket must be removed from service and replaced. If the measurement is more than 29 inches, the blanket may be cut along this line to remove the damaged portion. Use care and cut a straight, smooth edge using the appropriate cutting tool, i.e., utility knife or shears.

5. QUANTITY REQUIREMENTS

5.01 AERIAL PERSONNEL LIFTS - A minimum of one (1) insulating rubber blanket shall be carried on every aerial personnel lift. If there is a probability that the personnel lift may or will be used in towering work operations, a minimum of two (2) insulating rubber blankets will be made available for the workers involved in the work operation. See Section 649-350-902PT for work requirements.

5.02 DIGGER/DERRICKS and CRANES - A minimum of two (2) insulating rubber blankets shall be made available on vehicles used to dig anchor and pole holes and/or set poles or anchors in or around power utilities. Specific requirements will depend on the particular crane or digger/derrick unit, voltages encountered, pole lengths, etc. Refer to 621-205-010PT for work procedures regarding the placing or removing of poles near electrical power utilities.

5.03 SUPERVISORY WORK VEHICLES - Supervisors that manage outside plant work groups, who in the course of their daily work operations may come in contact with electrical power utilities, shall carry one (1) insulating rubber blanket. This would allow the supervisor to render assistance to an employee in any situation where an insulating rubber blanket is required to be used.

5.04 CABLE PLACING/REMOVING SUPPORT VEHICLES - All cable placing/removing support vehicles that will be used to place or remove telephone plant in or around electrical power utilities will need to carry a minimum of two (2) insulating rubber blankets.

NOTE: INSULATING RUBBER GLOVES ARE REQUIRED TO BE USED WHENEVER AN INSULATING RUBBER BLANKET IS USED. ALL WORKERS WHO ARE PROVIDED INSULATING RUBBER BLANKETS TO CARRY IN THEIR ASSIGNED VEHICLES MUST ALSO BE PROVIDED WITH THEIR OWN PERSONAL SET OF INSULATING RUBBER GLOVES.