

## Wood Pole Condition and Treatment Tag Interpretation



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### 1. Scope

This practice explains the meaning of the condition and treatment tags installed on Seattle City Light (SCL) wood poles by SCL contract inspectors.

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### 2. Application

This practice is directed at any individual who has a need to determine the condition of a wood pole or its treatment history.

Aluminum condition tags are typically attached on the road-facing side of the pole using a short galvanized or aluminum nail, 5 to 6 ft above the ground line. If tags from the previous inspections or treatments are present, the new tags are placed below the existing tags.

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### 3. Safety

Do not climb a pole that has been tagged or marked as rejected or bad order. A pre-climb inspection should always be performed regardless of any inspection tags attached to the pole.

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#### 4. Tag and Mark Interpretations

##### 4.1 Inspection Tag

Pole has been visually inspected only; no treatment was applied. Pole tags are embossed with pole inspection company name and year of inspection.

**Figure 4.1. Inspection Tag Examples**



##### 4.2 Treatment Tags

Treatment tags indicate minor or no deterioration. Pole was treated with Boron Rods. Tag is embossed with "BORON RODS".

**Figure 4.2. Treatment Tag Example**



##### 4.3 Red Arrow Tags

Red tags with arrow pointing up to are used to show Bad Order (BO) above ground line.

**Figure 4.3a. Bad Order Above Ground Line Tag Example**



Red tags with arrow pointing down to are used to show BO below ground line.

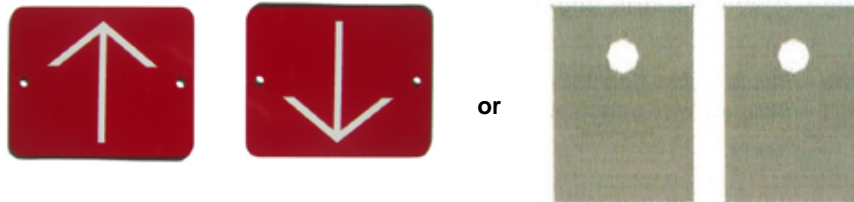
**Figure 4.3b. Bad Order Below Ground Line Tag Example**



#### 4.4 Double Rectangle Tags

Double rectangle tags are used to show that BO pole needs to be replaced as soon as possible. The arrangement may consist of either two red tags used together (one tag with arrow pointing up, one tag with arrow pointing down), or two plain tags used together.

**Figure 4.4 Double Rectangle Tags Example**



#### 4.5 Ring Marks

White marking paint, along with other methods, is used to create ring marks around poles. Ring marks signify pending removal of the pole.

A single white ring, painted around the pole at eye level, indicates SCL Pole Engineering (North or South) is planning to replace the pole.

**Figure 4.5a. Single Ring Marks**



Double white rings painted around the pole at eye level indicate that SCL Joint Use Engineering is planning to replace the pole.

**Figure 4.5b. Double White Rings**



Note: Multiple deep rings encircling the pole are sometimes cut by lineworkers using a chainsaw. These ring cuts indicate a BO pole and signify “do not climb.” This practice is discouraged.

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## 5. Sources

**Almetek Industries, Inc.;** [www.almetek.com](http://www.almetek.com)

**Intec Services, Inc.;** [www.intecservicesinc.com](http://www.intecservicesinc.com)

**Neuansourinh, Ponet;** SCL Standards Engineer and originator of 0117.23  
([ponet.neuansourinh@seattle.gov](mailto:ponet.neuansourinh@seattle.gov))

**Osrose Utilities Services, Inc.;** [www.osrose.com](http://www.osrose.com)

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