

*This article originally appeared in Transmission & Distribution World magazine and was reprinted in Performance Newsletter.*

# HENKELS & MCCOY **Performance**

A news publication of Henkels & McCoy, Inc.

Volume 33, Number 1 • September 2005

## ***Contractor Proud to be a Lineman***

***The biggest change has been the increased involvement by contractors in our customers' daily maintenance work***

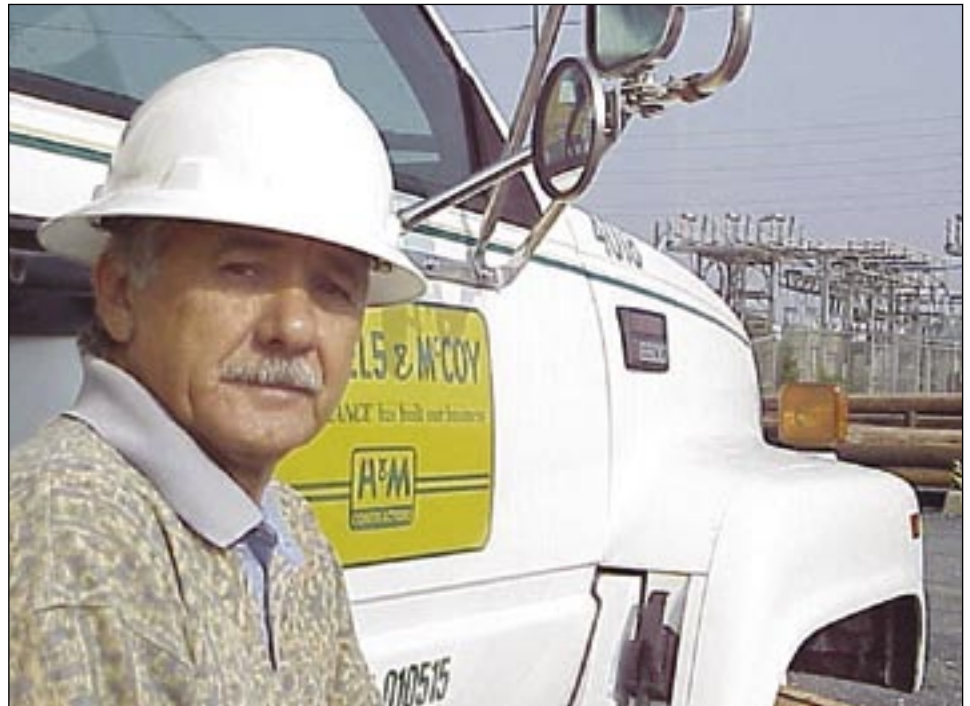
**By Mike Cardell,  
Henkels & McCoy, Inc.**

The power industry has evolved a lot since I started in 1970. My first job was trimming trees in the Northeast. That progressed into the apprenticeship for Outside Linemen in the mid-1970s, when I became a certified journeyman lineman. Since then, I have worked throughout the Eastern United States, specializing in distribution, but I've also done storm work, routine maintenance, line construction, reconductoring and transmission.

From a contractor's point of view, the biggest change I have seen has been how we are involved with customers' daily maintenance. Twenty years ago, the contractor didn't get that involved with doing things like permitting and tagging the system. Now, customers are sending us (contractors) to their permit and tagging schools.

### ***Safety and Respect for Work***

I think the biggest trend over the years has been the ever-increasing emphasis on safety. We have always stressed safety, but today you just can't stress it enough. And along with that has come more respect for the work we do. You do the best job you can, as safely as you can. When a job is done, it's nice to step back, be proud of what you have done and know that nothing happened, no accidents.



The most unique thing I've seen was in the early 1990s during a severe ice storm near the Canadian border. As I recall, we had spent the night in our trucks because of the black ice on the roads. The next morning, as we started to drive north into Canada, the ice buildup on the lines caused a double-circuit transmission tower to crumble right in front of us. When that tower came down, it created a domino effect with towers crumbling one after another as far as the eye could see. We just sat there and watched them fall. I was totally in awe and the damage... the dam-

age was unbelievable. That was something to see.

I'm really proud to be a lineman. There's so much satisfaction in this type of work, especially restoration. It's gratifying for a person to thank you for restoring their power that had been out for days. I can't think of a better trade to be in.

*From T&D World, September 2004.  
Reprinted with permission of PRIMEDIA  
Business Magazines and Media, Inc.  
Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.*