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Poster Session: Poster 1

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Electrocution: Contact Burns

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Case Report

(Picture 1) **(Picture 2)**





The deceased was loading waste papers (known in vernacular as *Pashti*) in the truck from the roof of his ground floor shop. Somewhere nearby, a faulty live unguarded wire was present. His arm accidentally touched that live wire. He got a jolt from elecricity. As a consequence, he was thrown off from the roof and fell down. But while he was falling down, his back came in contact with another live high voltage wire going across his roof. This caused an electric entry mark on his back, as shown in picture 3 above. But what was most interesting was that we found a garland like burn mark around his neck. It was found that at the time he fell down and got the electric shock, he was wearing a metallic chain around his neck. Presumably, the high voltage current found its way through the chain. Since the chain was in contact with the chest at that time, the deceased got these garland like burns.

The interesting question was whether these were endogenous (Joule) burns, or exogenous burns (caused by heating or sparking). There is no surefire way to know this, but since a metallic chain has very low resistance, it can reasonably be surmised that it must not have got heated up. We believe that the high tension current somehow found its way to the metallic chain, and entered the chest from there too, causing Joule burns at that area. Picture 1 is a long shot showing these garland type Joule burns. We propose a new name for these typical burns - *Patterned Joule Burns*. Picture 2 is a close shot of these *Patterned Joule Burns*.

(N.B. Click all pictures to enlarge!)

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