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Accident creates tense moments for drivers

By **Juliana Mathews/newseditor@gonzalescannon.com**

On April 9 at about 3:45 p.m., the crane of a delivery truck struck power lines after delivering roofing shingles at Yellow Rose Way and Seydler Ave.

The San Antonio-based West End delivery truck is outfitted with a crane to assist lifting the shingles up to the roof. The crane was accidentally left in the upright position, striking the power lines as the truck exited the Lou's Garden Housing Development. This created a chain of events: a small grass fire was ignited by the sparks, two poles were pushed to 45-degree angles dropping active power lines across Seydler, which in turn landed on a passing car.

Crissy O'Neal, the driver of the passing car struck by power lines, was terrified. "Sparks were flying! That's when I got scared and started crying," she said. "I'm still shaking."

Despite her frightened state, O'Neal was quick to call 911. She was unharmed, but her car sustained minor damage to the paint and some of the electronics. The remorseful truck driver, Steve DeLeon, didn't hesitate to accept the blame. "It was my fault," he said. "I've been doing this for two years, and I always do it in a specific order, first putting down the jacks, and then the crane. I just forgot the crane was in the air."

Thinking everything was in place, he began the drive back to San Antonio, unaware the crane was still in a raised position until it was too late.

"I heard the explosion, saw sparks flying, and then saw the second pole leaning at a 45-degree angle," said DeLeon. DeLeon and his helper stayed in the truck until they were given the "all clear" when the power supply was cut to the area.

The electrical power remained out for several hours in the neighborhood, and as far-reaching as HEB and WB Farm and Ranch Supply.

In addition to the city's first responders, City Manger Allen Barnes and GVEC were quick to respond. Pony poles were quickly erected to brace the two tilting power poles, to assist in the restoration of power. Power was restored within a few hours and the poles were scheduled for repair the next day.



The crane of a shingles delivery truck struck power lines as the truck exited the Lou's Garden subdivision April 9, creating a chain of events: a small grass fire was ignited by the sparks, two poles were pushed to 45-degree angles dropping active power lines across Seydler St., which in turn landed on a passing car. See story, Page A12. (Photo by Juliana Mathews)