



Farm safety and electricity

Safety awareness working around overhead and underground electrical assets

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Table of Contents

1. Overview
2. Stay safe around electrical infrastructure
3. Be aware
4. Consider all electrical hazards on your property
5. Do some basic checks before starting work
6. Fallen powerlines
7. What to do if you hit a power pole
8. Contact us
9. Other useful numbers

1. Overview

- Review your farm activities and work practices near electrical infrastructure.
- Look around your property and take note of all overhead powerlines.
- Make sure you know where all underground powerlines are buried.
- Stay at least 10 metres away from fallen powerlines - the area around damaged electrical assets including the ground, equipment and other objects (commonly known as the danger zone) could be energized.
- If you see a fallen line, call Horizon Power on **13 23 51** and Emergency Services on **000**.



2. Stay safe around electrical infrastructure

- Farming hazards can include the unintentional release of electricity. This release of electricity can cause property damage, injuries, bushfires and fatalities (electrocution).
- Many farm workers have been seriously injured as a result of contacting powerlines while moving or installing augers or lifting grain probes, and irrigation pipes.
- With widespread use of electricity on today's farming operations, we want you to be aware of the potential dangers of using electricity.



2. Stay safe around electrical infrastructure

- Electricity will seek every available path to the ground. When people or other objects get too close and come into contact with a power line, there is an instant flow of electricity through them to ground.
- You don't need to come into direct contact with powerlines to receive an electric shock as electricity can 'jump' or arc across air gaps.
- To stay safe around electricity, always observe safe practices whenever you are near overhead and underground electrical assets.



3. Be aware

- Most accidental contact occurs with powerlines sagging between poles but often machinery hit poles which bring conductors down also.
- Powerlines can sway in the wind and sag as temperatures rise, so what appears to be a safe working distance may later expose people or property to serious risks.
- The majority of overhead power lines have no protective insulation and any contact with them is dangerous.
- Metallic and non-metallic materials including tree limbs, tyres, ropes, straw and hay, will conduct electricity depending on their moisture content and surface contamination e.g: dust.
- Powerlines can be difficult to see outdoors. Locating them can be challenging even on bright, sunny days and even more so in low light, rain, cloudy weather, or at dawn or dusk.



4. Consider all electrical hazards on your property

- Plant and machinery such as irrigation pipes, grain augers, elevators, grain silos, cranes and excavators all have the potential to contact powerlines. Always lower an auger or other machinery before moving it.
- Ensure equipment operators and workers are aware of overhead and underground power line locations, specified exclusion zones and the height and reach of equipment being used.
- Use highly visible warning markers to highlight overhead powerlines. Contact your electricity distributor for advice on visual markers.



5. Do some basic checks before starting work

- Determine the height and reach of all machinery and equipment used near overhead powerlines and consider the way it's used to identify hazardous situations.
- Keep all crops and vegetation well clear of electrical assets.
- Hire a professional tree contractor if you suspect that vegetation near powerlines or poles could expose people or property to electrical risk.
- Ensure you have clearly defined emergency procedures and that all workers are familiar with them.



5. Do some basic checks before starting work

Always be aware of what is above you if your work involves:

- Raising the tipper tray of trucks,
- Raising equipment such as irrigation pipes overhead,
- Climbing on top of machinery or storage silos,
- Using tall machinery, such as cranes or augers, and / or
- Driving high vehicles.



6. Fallen powerlines

- A fallen powerline can send electricity into the ground for up to 10 metres all around it. If you see a fallen powerline, don't touch anything near it and keep clear of the 10 metre danger zone.
- It's always safest to assume a fallen powerline is live and to stay away.
- Always keep well clear of powerlines, even if they are draped across a tree or fence, and contact Horizon Power immediately.
- Alert others to prevent them from approaching the fallen powerlines.



7. What to do if you hit a power pole

If a machine or vehicle comes into contact with powerlines follow these steps

- Call '000' immediately to report powerlines are down and contact your electricity distributor to have the power switched off.
- Stay calm and remain in the machine or vehicle until the power has been switched off.
- Do not attempt to get out of the vehicle as you risk being electrocuted by creating a shock path through your body to the ground as you exit. If another danger occurs such as fire and you must jump clear, keep both feet together, while landing upright, to prevent getting an electric shock from the energised ground around the machine. Then, still keeping both feet together, hop well clear of the machine or alternatively shuffle one foot forward a little at a time, never letting the heel of one foot move past the toe of the other.
- Never approach, or allow others to approach, someone or something that has come into contact with powerlines, transformers and other electrical equipment.

7. What to do if you hit a power pole

Danger Zone

- A danger zone is a specific area surrounding fallen live electrical apparatus that persons, equipment and materials must not enter.
- The area of the danger zone is determined by the voltage of the electrical apparatus.
- If an electrical apparatus, such as a live conductor, moves, the danger zone moves with it. This change of danger zone can place persons, tools, equipment, apparatus and other items at risk if not carefully planned for.
- The normal danger zone distances for HV underground insulated conductors are generally not applicable unless the cores are exposed due to the cable sheath or insulation being compromised.



8. Contact us

Office	Phone
Emergency or supply interruptions	13 23 51
Faulty streetlights and poles	1800 264 914
Residential enquiries	1800 267 926
Business enquiries	1800 737 036
TIS (translating service for customers who don't speak English)	13 14 50
TTY (for customers with hearing or speech difficulties)	1800 461 499



8. Contact us

Office	Phone
West Kimberley Regional Office	(08) 9192 9900
East Kimberley Regional Office	(08) 9166 4700
West Pilbara Head Office	(08) 9159 7250
East Pilbara Regional Office	(08) 9173 8281
Gascoyne Mid West Regional Office	(08) 9941 6299



9. Other useful numbers

Office	Phone
Police, Ambulance, Fire	000
State Emergency Service	13 25 00
Water Corporation (faults and emergencies)	13 13 75
Telstra (faults and service difficulties)	13 22 03
Dial Before You Dig	1100





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