

ELECTRICITY AND AGRICULTURE



What should I do before commencing any work on a property?

- Know the location of powerlines on the property and their proximity to your work.
- Provide workers with accurate, up-to-date maps/diagrams showing the location of powerlines on the property, also indicating safe traffic paths to eliminate the possibility of powerline contact.
- Complete a risk assessment so as to identify and put in place the appropriate control measures to prevent any hazards (including work practices and procedures) which may have the potential to harm the health or safety of a person. This should be completed for each paddock and piece of machinery to be used.
- Install visual markers in any areas where electrical hazards are identified prior to commencing work, as vision can be obstructed due to blind spots in machinery.
- Carefully monitor weather conditions - powerlines can sway in winds, sag as temperature increases and are difficult to see at dawn and dusk.
- Ensure operators are aware of the height and reach of their machinery in both stowed and working positions to ensure that minimum approach distance to powerlines are maintained (see Country Energy's fact sheet 'What you need to know about using machinery near powerlines' for minimum approach distances).
- Machinery measuring over 4.6 metres has a high risk of contacting overhead powerlines and should be closely monitored to ensure required minimum approach distances are maintained.



Safe work habits

- Ensure required minimum approach distances, the amount of space required to be kept between machinery and anything held by a person and the powerlines in order to prevent electricity arcing to you or the machinery are maintained.
- Assign a competent safety observer to each work team to guide machinery movements near overhead powerlines, in order to warn the person/operator of unsafe conditions and ensure that minimum safety approach distances are maintained.



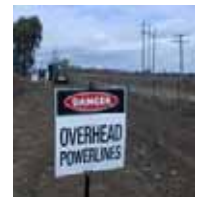
- Lower all machinery to the transport position when relocating.

What else can I do to make my property 'power safe'?

- Ensure maintenance of machinery and loading/unloading activities are carried out well away from powerlines.
- To warn workers of the presence of overhead powerlines:
 - Install appropriate signage at least 8 to 10 metres either side of powerlines
 - Have visual indicators such as flag markers fitted to the powerlines (contact Country Energy)
 - Where possible, provide ground barriers.

For more information

Country Energy's Public Safety team is available to conduct Electrical Awareness sessions and discuss any questions relating to electrical safety.



For more information on electrical safety please call Country Energy:

General enquiries 13 23 56

Supply interruptions 13 20 80

or visit www.countryenergy.com.au/safety

See also: WorkCover Code of Practice 'Work near overhead powerlines' which can be viewed at: www.workcover.nsw.gov.au or you can purchase a copy of the Code of Conduct by contacting WorkCover on 1300 799 003.

Safety first:

- You can still be injured without directly contacting an overhead powerline, as electricity can arc across open spaces – so keep your distance!
- Be aware that the apparent height of powerlines will vary depending upon the angle which they are viewed.
- Always treat all powerlines as alive even though they may appear to be dead.

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