

21 July 2017

Keep safe around electricity on farms

In conjunction with National Farm Safety, Essential Energy is encouraging farmers and their workers to stay safe around the electricity network when conducting farming activities.

General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, said Essential Energy worked closely with the agricultural industry and supported the theme of this year's Farmsafe Australia national week of 'Creating a resilient, safe and healthy ag community'.

"Essential Energy operates across 95 per cent of NSW with customers in regional and rural communities and many either work for, or are affected by, agricultural industry activities," David said.

"We want our farmers and their workers to return home safely to their families at the end of each day."

There have been several incidents of contact with electrical infrastructure this year across the Essential Energy footprint involving farm-related activities or equipment.

Recent examples have included farm machinery hitting power poles on properties; harvesting equipment contacting powerlines and damaging electrical infrastructure; and high-loads being driven into electrical network assets and causing power outages.

"We remind farmers to Look up and Live when working around powerlines and other electrical assets on their properties," David said. "Being aware of the location of power poles and wires when working on the farm is one of the most important steps in keeping everyone safe."

Property owners are advised to identify and mark overhead powerlines at ground level to increase their visibility for farm workers.

"Essential Energy can install powerline markers to improve powerline visibility for those transporting high loads or operating farm machinery or equipment, and provide electricity network maps showing the location of wires on a property."

For more information about electrical safety, visit: www.essentialenergy.com.au/agribusiness for fact sheets, safety stickers and videos to assist workers to work safely near overhead powerlines.

Customers can also enquire about powerline markers by completing the online form available at www.essentialenergy.com.au/overhead.

If machinery does contact overhead powerlines or power poles, stay in the vehicle if it is safe to do so and call Essential Energy immediately on **13 20 80**.

Bystanders should remain at least eight metres away from the vehicle or anything in contact with it and call emergency services (**000**) if the situation is life-threatening.

**Media contact: Simone Plews, Corporate Media Manager
02 6588 6733 or 0457 514 993**

Essential Energy is the operator of one of Australia's largest electricity networks spanning 95 per cent of New South Wales' land mass. Owned by the New South Wales Government, Essential Energy also provides water and sewerage services to customers in far western New South Wales.