

Media Release



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Workplace electrical safety a duty for all

In conjunction with Safe Work Australia's *World Day for Health and Safety at Work* on Friday, 28 April 2017, Essential Energy is encouraging everyone to consider electrical safety in their workplace.

General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, said tradespeople and other construction workers should be mindful of potential electrical hazards on their worksites, while those working in offices and other environments should also consider their risks.

"All workers should assess the potential risk of working close to an electrical hazard and put in place appropriate controls to prevent incidents occurring," David said.

"Consider the location of equipment relative to underground and overhead powerlines and keep plant, equipment and temporary structures such as scaffolding well clear of the electricity network."

In recent months, third party incidents such as farm machinery contacting power lines, burning-off igniting power poles, tree lopping bringing vegetation onto service lines and vehicle accidents have resulted in power outages across Essential Energy's footprint.

Essential Energy recommends on-site safety inductions to identify the location of potential electrical hazards in any work environment and appointing a competent safety observer to worksites to monitor work teams and guide machinery near overhead powerlines.

"For scaffolding, four metres clearance is needed between the structure and powerlines, and workers should maintain a distance of at least three metres," David said.

"If you are excavating, register your works with the free *Dial before you dig* referral service at www.1100.com.au to identify the location of underground utility assets before beginning work.

"In many cases, unplanned outages due to workplace incidents are avoidable and an unnecessary public safety risk. Not only are they dangerous, but they are expensive and inconvenient for all affected.

"Let's make safety a priority every day so everyone can get home safely to their family and loved ones."

For more information on electrical safety in the workplace, visit www.essentialenergy.com.au/safety or contact 13 23 91.

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Essential Energy is the operator of Australia's largest electricity network 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.