

Media Release



10 October 2018

Don't dig before checking what's underground

Essential Energy is reminding those renovating or excavating to check for underground utilities before beginning work to minimise the risk of damage to assets or disruption to vital services.

Head of Health, Safety and Environment, Christine Withycombe, said workers were legally obliged to contact the free national referral service Dial Before You Dig to confirm the location of underground networks before excavating.

"Knowing the location of underground cabling such as electricity, gas, telecommunications and water prior to work reduces the risk of death or serious injury to workers or the general public," Christine said.

"It's a statutory requirement under the Electricity Supply Act yet Essential Energy continues to receive regular reports of incidents involving machinery that has damaged underground cables."

In the past two months, Essential Energy has received eight reports of contractors or customers contacting underground electrical or streetlight cabling when digging or excavating. These incidents occurred in August and September in Batemans Bay, Dry Plain, Forbes, Forster, Narromine, Orange, Tumut and Wentworth.

"Heavy financial penalties apply to those found responsible for negligent behaviour when excavating," **Christine** said. "These types of incidents often result in damage to underground assets which require costly repairs and can impact services for local communities."

To contact Dial Before You Dig for underground utilities information, call 1100 or visit: www.1100.com.au.

For more information on working near Essential Energy's underground electricity network, visit: essentialenergy.com.au/dbyd



Caption: Essential Energy reminds those renovating or excavating to check for underground utilities before beginning works.

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