

# Media Release



16 March 2018

## Reap the rewards by planning a safe cotton harvest

Essential Energy is reminding agricultural workers to remain vigilant around its electricity network as preparations for cotton harvest commence across NSW.

General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, said Essential Energy worked closely with industry groups to ensure workers pre-planned their activities and recognised the increased risks at harvest time.

“This harvest, it’s important to undertake pre-work risk assessments for areas where large machinery will be operating,” David said.

“Brief workers about conditions at the beginning of each day and ensure machinery operators know the minimum clearance distances when working near powerlines and other electrical infrastructure on the property.”

Machinery should always be fully lowered before re-locating or transporting near powerlines. When conditions are hot or windy, powerlines can sag or way and increase the risk of machinery contact with wires.

“We recommend using ground level signage to identify where powerlines and electrical infrastructure are located, and always remember to ‘Look Up and Live’,” David added.

“As harvest gets busier, don’t become complacent. Electrical accidents can pose a serious safety risk for workers, resulting in downtime, potential loss of income for the landholder, and inconvenient power outages for the community.”

If machinery contacts overhead powerlines, operators should remain in the vehicle and call Essential Energy immediately on 13 20 80 to disconnect supply.

Essential Energy can install aerial markers on properties at a reasonable cost to improve powerline visibility for machinery operators. Visit [essentialenergy.com.au/overhead](https://essentialenergy.com.au/overhead) and fill out an online enquiry form.

For information about electricity and cotton harvest, visit [essentialenergy.com.au/agribusiness](https://essentialenergy.com.au/agribusiness).

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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’ 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.

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***Caption:*** Agricultural workers should remain vigilant around Essential Energy's electricity network during cotton harvest.

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