

## What should I do before commencing any work at a work site?

- Know the location of powerlines on the worksite and their proximity to your work
- 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 Essential Energy's fact sheet 'Work near overhead powerlines' for information on minimum approach distances)
- Machinery measuring over 4.6 metres have a high risk of contacting overhead powerlines and should be closely monitored to ensure required minimum approach distances are maintained
- Ensure all workers know the Essential Energy power outage number **13 20 80** as well as emergency procedures.



## Safe work habits

- 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
- 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
- Lower all machinery to the transport position when relocating every time.

## What are the safe approach distances when working near powerlines?

Workers and their equipment should not approach overhead powerlines any closer than the following, when machinery is being operated:

Powerlines with voltages up to 132 000 volts	e.g. low voltage and high voltage distribution and subtransmission lines, usually on poles	3m
Between 132 000 and 330 000 volts	e.g. subtransmission and transmission lines on either poles or towers	6m
More than 330 000 volts	e.g. transmission lines usually on towers	8m

Minimum approach distances when working near powerlines

## For more information

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

For more information on electrical safety please call Essential Energy:

General enquiries **13 23 91**

Power outages **13 20 80**

Follow us



or visit [essentialenergy.com.au/safety](http://essentialenergy.com.au/safety)

Essential Energy recommends you familiarise yourself with the latest SafeWork NSW Code of Practice 'Work near Overhead Powerlines', which can be viewed at [www.safework.nsw.gov.au](http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au) or you can purchase a copy of the Code of conduct by contacting SafeWork NSW on 13 10 50.

## 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.

*Be safe, because they need you*

