

What to do if your vehicle or machinery comes into contact with an overhead power line:

- > If any part of your vehicle is in contact with an overhead power line or within 5 metres of a fallen line then stay on it until the Emergency Services or Electricity Company arrive, unless you are in danger.
- > Phone the Electricity Company using the number on this leaflet.
- > If you must get off then you should jump clear making leaping strides so that one foot is off the ground at all times until you are at least 5 metres away.
- > Do not return to the vehicle.
- > Keep others away from the vehicle. Touching it or even getting too close could kill them.
- > Never touch overhead power lines, always assume that lines are live unless the Electricity Company has told you they are dead.

This information should be used in conjunction with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) leaflet, **Shock Horror** – <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg389.pdf>.

Emergency contact numbers

Network Operator Emergency contact number
Northern Ireland Electricity Ltd 0800 616 817

Network Operator Advice contact number
Northern Ireland Electricity Ltd 08457 643 643



Energy Networks Association
6th Floor, Dean Bradley House
52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Tel +44 (0)20 7706 5100
Fax +44 (0)20 7706 5101
www.energynetworks.org

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Energy Networks Association

Working in the Vicinity of Overhead Lines

Vital energy, delivered safely

There are overhead power lines criss-crossing the country. Often unnoticed, they are essential to provide electricity to cities, towns, villages and rural communities. They carry voltages ranging from 230 volts (domestic voltage) up to 400,000 volts. Even domestic voltage can be fatal and high voltage electricity can jump large gaps.

The energy network is designed to keep you safe, but people die each year due to accidental contact with overhead power lines, whilst others endure life changing injury with the lives of their families also suffering as a result.

The risk of danger can be considerably reduced by following some simple safety tips.



Staying safe

- > Any power lines, electricity substations or electrical engineering equipment may be live and could kill you. Do not touch them, or any object or person that is in contact with them – even if you believe the power is off, it could be turned on again without warning.
- > Electricity can jump gaps so even getting too close to lines can be dangerous. Many objects can also conduct electricity such as trees, string, rope and water.
- > Rubber boots will not protect you and not all power lines are insulated.
- > Do not assume lines on wood poles are telephone lines – most overhead power lines are supported by poles.
- > If an overhead power line has fallen to the ground it may still be live, keep more than 5 metres away – the current can travel along the ground, through objects such as fences or metal objects and through water or other liquids. You do not need to touch the power line to be killed by it.
- > If you need to get clear, jump clear making leaping strides so that one foot is off the ground at all times until you are 5 metres away.

Top tips

1. Do not touch or get close to power lines.
2. Keep 5 metres away from fallen or damaged power lines, AND
3. Contact the emergency services and the Electricity Company immediately.

Advice for working near overhead power lines

Planning ahead

You must assess the risk to any employees carrying out activities near power lines and adopt a safe system of work that ensures they do not make contact with the lines.

Before carrying out any work always walk the work site and access routes and check for overhead power lines.

If you are doing any work or moving anything and there is a risk that contact could be made with the overhead power lines, you should contact your local Electricity Company for advice before starting. Always follow the advice given by the Electricity Company.

There is guidance for specific trades and activities here: <http://www.energynetworks.org/electricity/she/safety/safety-advice/public-safety-leaflets.html>.

You must give the Electricity Company at least two weeks notice of any minor works close to lines, and at least a month's notice for major works such as felling.

Get a copy of the HSE leaflet GS6 and use this to plan your work: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/g6.pdf>.

Use GS6 and advice from the Electricity Company to set up barriers and goalposts if necessary to keep people, plant and equipment away from the lines.

The best way to stay safe from overhead power lines is to stay well away.

Take extra care if you are using tall vehicles, scaffold platforms, tipper trucks, cranes, elevated work platforms, ladders or any long or tall equipment near an overhead power line.

Always carry ladders or long objects in a horizontal position.