

Simple actions can save lives

- > Make sure anyone working on your land knows the safety advice and information set out above, including the location of overhead lines on your land, and train them on the actions they need to take.
- > Take the emergency telephone number of your local Electricity Company from this leaflet, put it in your phone and get your workers to do the same.
- > Show them the HSE **Shock Horror** leaflet.

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



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Energy Networks Association Safety Information for Farmers Using Polytunnels

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.

Staying safe with polytunnels

Polytunnels should not be erected underneath or close to overhead power lines.

You must ensure that all people used to erect or dismantle polytunnels in the vicinity of overhead power lines are clearly advised of the dangers from:

- > Moving polytunnels and components to and from the site of erection.
- > Physically erecting and dismantling the polytunnels.
- > Make sure plastic sheeting is secure from high winds, both when you are erecting it and when it is fixed in place.
- > Please consider workers whose first language is not English.

Before you start work

Always check for overhead power lines in the area.

A week or two before you plan to start work, you should contact your local Electricity Company for advice about the precautions and safe working practices to be followed near overhead power lines first.

Do not assume that lines can be made dead.

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

Always transport long objects such as poles or ladders beneath lines in a horizontal position.

Think ahead

- > Mark overhead power lines and their voltages on your farm maps. Your local Electricity Company will supply this information.
- > Your local Electricity Company will also provide free information and advice about the precautions and safe working practices to be followed near overhead power lines.
- > Overhead power lines should be at a minimum clearance from the ground of 5.2 metres (17 feet). However, live equipment fitted on poles maybe as low as 4.3 metres (14 feet).
- > Ensure that anyone using equipment used on your farm, including contractors, is aware of line heights and that they know the full maximum height and vertical reach of their equipment.
- > If possible only use machines less than 4.0 metres high.
- > Get copies of the HSE leaflets GS6 and AIS8 and use them to plan your work: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais8.pdf> and <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/g6.pdf>.