

Electrical safety on farms

Working safely around powerlines on farms

Creating a safer state
with electricity and gas

When farming equipment gets too close to powerlines, the results can be fatal.

Be aware of the dangers of overhead powerlines.

Did you know?

- » You don't have to make contact with a powerline for it to be fatal. Electricity can jump if equipment or machinery gets too close to powerlines.
- » Each year, serious injuries or fatalities occur in Victoria as a result of farming equipment and machinery hitting powerlines.
- » Farmers and land owners
 - › are responsible for the safety of others entering their property
 - › must inform anyone entering their property of all hazards present on their property, this includes the location of powerlines
 - › often store a map of the underground power supply to their property in the meter box/enclosure.
- » During windy and/or hot conditions powerlines can sag close to the ground, or sway by up to 3 metres or more.
- » There may be unmarked underground power cables up to 10m around a power pole.

Machinery and equipment

Understand the capabilities and limitations of your equipment and machinery when working near powerlines.

- » Set up equipment so that it cannot physically come closer than 6.4 metres to powerlines when:
 - › loading and unloading
 - › lifting
 - › tipping, and
 - › excavating.
- » Identify the maximum height of your machinery in travel and all working modes. You should never set up or operate machinery under powerlines.
- » Stow away booms, any extendable equipment and lower tipper trays before moving or traversing machinery.

Contact with an overhead or underground powerline

- » Call 000 if anyone is injured or if there is an immediate risk.
 - » Call the power company who owns the powerlines at your location.
 - » Instruct anyone nearby to stay at least 10m clear from the incident area.
 - » If possible, try to operate the machinery to break contact with the powerline.
- » If safe to do so, stay in your vehicle.
 - » If it is not safe e.g. in case of fire, jump clear from the vehicle, keeping legs and feet close together and landing both feet on the ground at the same time. Then shuffle with both feet staying close together to a distance more than 10m away from the vehicle. NEVER touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
 - » Once clear, do not return to the machinery or approach the powerline.
 - » Always assume that any powerline is live, even if it is broken and on the ground.



Stay calm, disengage gently and back away, if possible. Call emergency number and stay in the cab.



**EXTREME DANGER!
Never make contact or step down between machine and ground.**

Powerlines and poles

Keep areas clear under and near powerlines and power poles. Do not:

- » place or store materials (hay, timber and fallen trees)
- » alter ground levels (dam walls, cut and fill)
- » erect or place structures or equipment including sheds, silos, irrigation equipment, etc.
- » plant tall growing trees.

Underground power cables

Know and record the location of underground cables. Use Dial Before You Dig (1100.com.au) before any digging or excavation work.

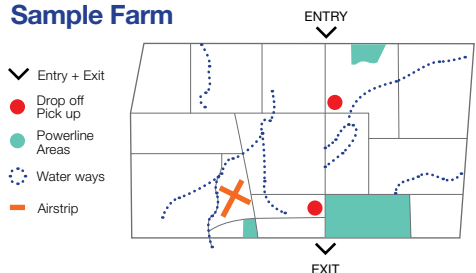
Note: Only assets owned by utilities will be shown on DBYD drawings.

Keep records available and advise anyone entering the farm or property of the risk of existing overhead powerlines and underground cables.

Plan ahead

- » Create and clearly identify designated site entry and exit locations, drop off and pick up points.
- » Set up physical barriers, warning signs, barricades and visual aids to restrict access to areas under powerlines.
- » Plan vehicle, machinery and equipment travel paths:
 - » consider where machinery, vehicles or equipment will be moving on your property
 - » create designated travel paths for vehicles with high equipment to avoid them going under or near powerlines
 - » clearly mark routes on maps and make them available to all workers
 - » if you have tall machinery, attach 'No Go Zone' stickers near controls to remind operators of safety risks and exclusion zones. These are available on our [website](#).

Sample Farm



Farm safety checklist. Have you...

Yes or N/A

Created a detailed and accurate site plan highlighting all powerlines, travel routes, safe work areas and hazards.	
Set up loading and unloading zones for any truck pick-ups or deliveries in a location well away from powerlines.	
Spoken to your power company for advice on safely working near powerlines, if required. See contact details at back of brochure.	
Installed barriers or fences or signs to prevent high machinery from getting too close to powerlines.	
Installed warning signs at farm entry points or travel routes where powerlines run overhead.	
Installed warning signs along the route of known underground powerlines.	
Created a safety induction pack for any new workers or other people coming onto the farm to work.	
Educated all farm workers about the risk of overhead and underground powerlines, and the requirements of the No Go Zones.	
Kept records of inductions and training on electrical safety.	
Made an emergency plan for managing electrical incidents, which includes details about what action to take if contact is made with a powerline.	
Included emergency contact details of power companies in your farm emergency plan. See back of brochure for details.	
Attached No Go Zone stickers to all tall machinery and equipment.	
Saved power pole locations with exclusion zones onto farm GPS systems.	
Marked heights on your machinery near the operating controls.	



Further information and safety merchandise including stickers and brochures is available at: esv.vic.gov.au/lookupandlive

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