

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 Demolition Companies

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 demolition workers

Before carrying out any demolition work always stand back and check for overhead power lines and other electricity equipment.

At the planning stage of any demolition activity, you should contact your local Electricity Company for advice and obtain a copy of the local cable records before starting work.

Even when the electricity has been switched off there may still be live cables and equipment in a building.

Never demolish a building or structure until it has been confirmed that the electricity supply has been disconnected and all live cables and equipment have been removed.

Do not assume that lines can be made dead. Cutting off electricity supplies for planned work is only permitted under a strict legal process which electricity companies must follow.

There is no safe way to dig around live underground cables that are embedded in concrete.

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

Always assume an overhead power line is live and dangerous.

Keep all electricity equipment secure and protected from the weather.

Erect signs and barriers around any live lines that may remain on your site and brief your staff where they are and how to avoid them.

What to do if you damage an overhead power line or cable

Always follow the advice given by the Electricity Company.

If you damage an overhead power line or cable, stay well away and keep others away and contact the Electricity Company.

Get copies of the HSE leaflets GS6 and HS(G)47 for further advice on reducing the risks of contact with overhead lines and underground cables:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/gs6.pdf>.