



Electrical Safety on the Farm

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All the time.**

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Working on a farm involves using many different types of equipment and tools. Farm machinery comes in a variety of shapes and sizes for all types of jobs. Contacting or coming too close to overhead or underground power lines can be very dangerous. To prevent electrical contact and avoid serious injury or death, be sure to:

- know where overhead and underground power lines are located;
- keep all equipment away from overhead power lines; and
- locate underground power lines or wires prior to starting your work.

Electrocution Hazards

The most common risk of electrocution comes from contacts with overhead power lines. Overhead power lines are bare and getting too close or contacting them will create a path to the ground for electricity. Always treat overhead power lines as if they were energized.

Safe Distances While Passing Under Power Lines

Never measure line heights yourself. A Maritime Electric official can determine the height clearance needed for equipment travelling under the power lines through a site inspection. The required clearance must be maintained between the power line and the top of the equipment when travelling under it.



Avoiding Injury and Dangerous Situations

Be aware of overhead and underground power lines. Electrocution can occur when objects or equipment come too close to or contact power lines. You don't need to be touching the power line for electrocution to occur.

- Apply safety decals to all equipment that may pose electrical hazards and explain the hazards to persons working with the equipment.
- Inspect farm equipment for transport height and know the clearance required to allow safe passage under power lines.
- Equipment such as grain augers and sprayers must be lowered before moving them near power lines. Keep ladders, antennas, kites and poles away from power lines.
- Care should be taken when stringing fence wire along the same route as overhead power lines. Avoid stringing a fence where it may spring and come into contact with overhead lines, poles or power line attachments.
- Locate underground lines before any digging operation.
- Consider installing underground utility supplies for new or replaced power lines.





- Identify areas with potential risks of electrical shock and restrict access to those areas.
- Identify required safe limit distances. Design routes to avoid approaching safe limit distances.
- If you have a standby power system, ensure it is properly installed and review its location and operation with all workers.
- Do not attempt to raise or move a power line – call Maritime Electric.
- Use qualified, licensed electricians for work on electrical systems.
- Remember – non-metallic materials such as lumber, rubber, trees, rope and other semi-conductors may all conduct electricity.
- Consult the Prince Edward Island Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Farm Safety Code of Practice for additional farm safety information.

Contact with Power Lines

Despite all precautions, equipment sometimes comes into contact with power lines. It is important to know how to handle these situations.

- If your tractor or equipment comes into contact with power lines, try and move the equipment away from the contacted lines to a safe distance of at least 30 metres, if possible.
- If the tractor or equipment cannot be moved, stay inside or on the equipment until emergency personnel arrive. If someone approaches, tell them to stay 30 metres away and contact 9-1-1.
- If there is a fire and you must leave the tractor or equipment, jump and land with both feet together. Never touch the ground and the machinery at the same time. Move away by shuffling your feet side-by-side or hopping. Do this until you are at least 30 metres away.

Be sure to perform a thorough inspection on any equipment that has been involved with electrical contact. Tires, hydraulic equipment, electrical equipment and other equipment may be damaged. As required, use the services of qualified personal to inspect potentially damaged equipment.

Downed power lines are very dangerous. Never attempt to move a downed power line or anything that may be touching that line. Always assume the downed power line is energized. If you see a downed power line, call Maritime Electric and warn others to stay at least 30 metres away until qualified personnel arrive.

The area where the electricity contacts the ground is where the voltage is highest. Ground conditions can increase the hazard area – so if the conditions are wet or steel fencing or guard rails are present – increase the distance that you stay clear and warn others to stay clear.



Employee Training on the Farm

It is extremely important to train any newly hired workers in electrical safety on the farm and ensure seasonal employees are re-trained as often as needed. Be sure to explain:

- the risks associated with overhead and underground power lines;
- locations where overhead lines cross fields and over vehicle access point;
- how to avoid electrical injury on the farm; and
- what to do if an overhead line is contacted.

Contact Us

If you are interested in having a Maritime Electric employee deliver an Electrical Safety in the Workplace presentation please contact us.

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