

NSW FACT SHEET – ELECTRICAL LINES

1. MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE

Contact with live overhead or underground power lines kills people and causes many serious injuries every year.

An employer or person conducting a business at a workplace, must ensure that no person, plant equipment, vegetation or any item comes within an unsafe distance of electrical lines. If a safe distance cannot be maintained, then a risk assessment must be prepared.

2. DIAL BEFORE YOU DIG

Dial 1100 or visit www.1100.com.au. This is a free service providing information on known underground electrical lines. A DBYD search combined with on ground locator services will assist in identifying underground electrical hazards, prior to excavation.

3. WRITTEN RISK ASSESSMENT

If a safe distance cannot be maintained from the electrical lines, a 'written risk assessment' is to be prepared by a competent person in relation to the proposed works. This information will assist in determining what needs to be done to eliminate or control the hazards identified (*Section 166, WHS Reg 2017*).

4. CONTROL MEASURES

Control measures implemented to minimise the risk to the hazards identified, are to be consistent with requirements of the risk assessment and electrical authority, if they are responsible for the lines in question (*Section 166, WHS Reg*).



If the hazard cannot be eliminated, control measures must be implemented to minimise the risks, these control measures include:

- Substituting the system of work/plant so a safe distance can be maintained;
- Separating the hazard e.g. physical barrier;
- Administrative controls e.g. signage, warning barriers, safe work procedures, safety observer; and
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

5. MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

The site maintenance schedule should include a frequency for maintaining a safe distance to overhead electric lines e.g. vegetation, storage areas (*Section 166, WHS Reg*).

6. INFORMATION SOURCES

- Part 4.7 of the *WHS Reg 2017*, visit www.legislation.nsw.gov.au
- *Work Near Overhead Power Lines Code of Practice*, WorkCover 2006;
- *Work Near Underground Assets Guide*, SafeWork NSW 2007, visit www.safework.nsw.gov.au
- Email us: info@propertyrisk.com.au