

Toolbox Topics: Overhead Power Lines | Compliance Safety Manager

<http://www.compliancesafetymanager.com/resources/toolbox-topics/overhead-powerline-safety/>

Toolbox Topics: Safety for Overhead Power Lines



Under normal conditions, overhead power transmission lines are safe. However, construction work around overhead lines is not normal and overhead lines can be deadly if you don't pay attention to the hazards associated with them. The minimum clear distance for overhead lines is 10 feet for 50 kV (50,000 volts). Additional distance must be added for increased voltage. **RULE OF THUMB: Stay clear of power lines a distance equal to the height of the power pole**

supporting the line.

Overhead power lines are everywhere and people tend to underestimate the danger associated with them. Awareness of these safety practices is CRITICAL. Call the utility company if you have any questions. A mistake when working near overhead power lines could be your last one.

1. Never touch a power line with your hands, poles, sticks, or any other object. Even kite string can carry enough voltage to kill.
2. When power lines are low hanging or on the ground, stay clear and report them.
3. Most power lines are not insulated and offer little or no protection from shock or electrocution.
4. If you are working near a power line with a ladder, pipe, or other such object and lose control, let go and flee the area. Contact with the line and the ground can energize an area on the ground and cause severe injury or death.
5. Do not touch or attempt to remove any object that comes in contact with a power line. Call the utility company for assistance.
6. Never dig unless underground utilities have been located.
7. Maintain a clear distance of at least 50 feet from any downed power line.

8. Never climb a utility pole unless you have been trained and authorized to do so.
9. Never install antennas in a location where they could fall across a power line.
10. When raising ladders, erecting and dismantling scaffolding, or performing other work activities near power lines, use extreme caution.
11. Treat all overhead lines as hot.
12. Wind can blow materials and equipment into power lines. Do not use tag lines near power lines.
13. When working near power lines, ladders, pipes, conduit, and other long material should be carried by two people and should be below shoulder height.
14. If equipment comes in contact with power lines and you can not move the contacting part away from the lines, shut down the equipment and wait for the power to be shut off. **STAY ON THE EQUIPMENT UNTIL THE POWER IS SHUT OFF.** (Exception is when staying on the equipment presents a greater danger; as in the case of burning equipment.)
15. If on energized equipment or in an energized area, exit the area by taking small (one inch) shuffling steps.

About Craig Safety Technologies

Craig Safety Technologies, Inc. was founded in 1998 by Brenda Craig, a leader in industrial safety and safety software. Craig Safety Technologies provides Compliance Safety Manager™, a comprehensive and highly flexible web-based safety compliance management solution created to help companies understand and meet the regulatory requirements of the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Craig Safety Technologies, Inc. specializes in providing accountability and risk management for personnel and equipment assets for organizations across multiple industries. Specific CST services include: conducting on-site assessments of compliance readiness; training, documentation; and prescribing and implementing activities to ensure compliance with federal regulations. In 2004, CST delivered one of the industry's first comprehensive patented software to document DOT and OSHA compliance activities necessary to comply with federal mandates.