

## Polytunnels

There have been a number of incidents, including fatalities to people erecting and dismantling polytunnels in the vicinity of overhead lines.

A worker was in the process of constructing a polytunnel. He connected 13 of the 0.5m extension poles to save time carrying them from the far end of the field. The poles touched an 11,000volt line and tragically the worker was killed instantly.

Polytunnels should not be erected under or close to overhead power lines.

When moving and connecting poles keep them parallel to the ground. In windy conditions make sure the sheeting can't be blown towards an overhead line.

### Factors to be aware of:

- Even the lowest voltage overhead lines can produce 10,000 times more current than is required to kill a person.
- High Voltage electricity can jump gaps.
- Touching electricity lines or objects or people in contact with the lines can be fatal.
- Trees, string, ropes and water can conduct electricity.
- Lines that are damaged or on the ground may still be live and dangerous.

### Further information from:

#### Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

- **Guidance Note GS6:** Avoidance of danger from overhead electric power lines
- **Shock Horror:** Safe Working near overhead power lines in agriculture

Free to download from [www.books.hse.gov.uk](http://www.books.hse.gov.uk) or phone 01787 881165

#### Energy Networks Association

Log on to their website for industry and safety information [www.energynetworks.org](http://www.energynetworks.org)

### And finally remember

**Don't get too close... you may feel the force**

## Contact us

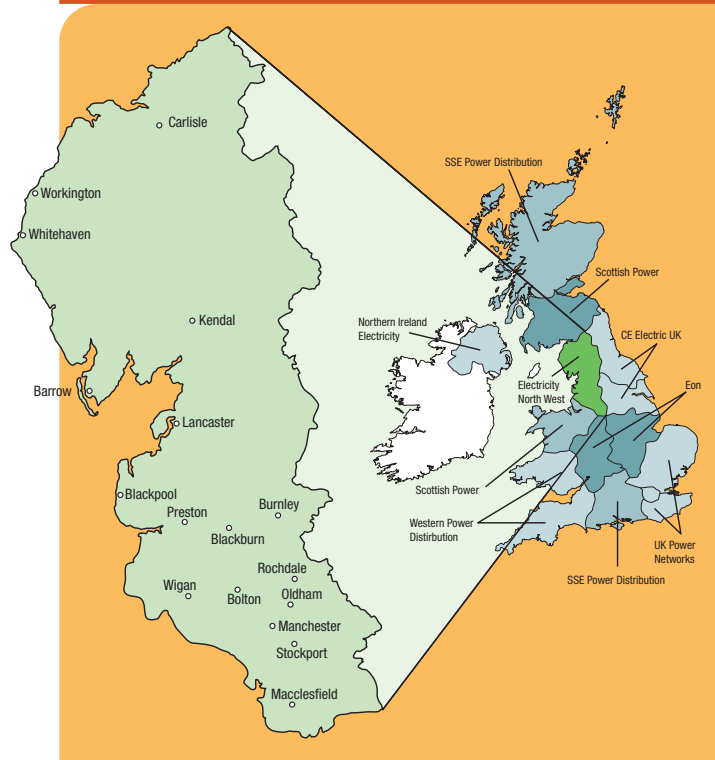
To report hazards or incidents in proximity to electrical installations in Electricity North West's area call our 24 hour emergency number:

**0800 195 4141**

To obtain plans of the network email

**DatamanagementDSMC@enwl.co.uk** or call **0800 195 4749** for plans and general enquiries

Visit our website [www.enwl.co.uk](http://www.enwl.co.uk)



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## Electricity Overhead Lines

Advice for avoiding danger for farmers and agricultural contractors



# Working throughout North West England, Electricity North West owns, operates and maintains the electricity distribution network.

Our equipment is designed so that it is not dangerous in normal circumstances, however every year people working in the agriculture sector are seriously injured as a result of accidents with electricity overhead lines.

Certain tasks and types of equipment used in farming can increase the risk of accidents involving electricity.

## For example:

- A farm worker received a serious electric shock when he touched a 33,000 volt overhead line whilst moving an aluminium irrigation pipe. The worker was knocked over by the flashover and suffered burns to his shoulder and foot. **He could easily have been killed.**
- A farmer who drove his tractor into a pole supporting a high voltage power line escaped serious injury when the live line landed on his cab roof. **His blood pressure and heart rate were temporarily affected.**
- A worker struck a 33,000 volt overhead line whilst moving metal pig huts from one farm to another. The worker was burnt on the scalp, hip and feet resulting in amputation of several toes and permanent severe disability. **The farm company were prosecuted and fined.**



**Yellow and black Danger of Death warning signs are fixed to our equipment, fences, poles and towers.**

## Be aware in the vicinity of overhead electricity lines

- ⚠ Make sure that you, your employees and contractors are aware of the routes of overhead power lines running across your land or near boundaries.
- ⚠ We can supply plans of the routes. The ways to contact us are over the page.
- ⚠ Farm machinery is increasing in size so consider the height and reach of equipment when buying and using equipment.
- ⚠ A jet of water or slurry can cause a discharge of electricity from a power line with fatal or severe consequences.
- ⚠ Don't stack anything directly below or near to overhead lines as clearance distances may be compromised.
- ⚠ When handling or moving scaffolding, ladders, piping or long objects keep a safe distance from overhead lines.
- ⚠ Carry the above items horizontal to the ground to avoid inadvertent contact with lines.
- ⚠ Don't raise the bed of a tipper lorry beneath an overhead line or drive a high vehicle below.
- ⚠ Make sure warning notices are displayed on sites and in cabs.
- ⚠ Rubber tyres or boots will not protect you against high voltage.
- ⚠ Watch out for stay wires when using machinery near poles.
- ⚠ Don't erect any barns or stables near overhead lines.

## Be aware!

**Tipper Lorries, Loaders, Tractors, Cranes, Fork Lift Trucks, Combines, Sprayers, Slurry and Rain Guns:**



This equipment is at risk of extending within reach of overhead power lines, so take extra care when using it.

### What to do if contact is made with an overhead line:

- Phone us with the accurate location of the incident so we can quickly get to site or remotely switch off the power. Telephone **0800 195 4141** in emergency.
- If you are in contact with or close to a damaged overhead line move away as fast as you can and stay away until the emergency service or our engineer arrives.
- Once a line is on the ground you don't have to touch it to be killed as the current can travel through the ground or along a fence.
- Lines which have been damaged can stay live or become live again without warning by automatic operation of our system.
- Do report any damage or contact to equipment no matter how minor it seems.

### If a machine is touching an overhead line:

- The driver can remain safe by staying in the cab of the vehicle.
- If the machine can be freed by the cab controls or driven clear without breaking or bringing the line to ground then carefully manoeuvre it free.
- If it can't be operated stay in the cab and warn other people to stay back.
- Do not leave the cab until our engineers have confirmed it safe to do so.
- If there is risk of fire or other hazard, JUMP well clear to avoid contact with the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Try to land with both feet together and continue to jump away for at least 15 metres.
- Keep everyone away until advised by our engineers that the power is off.
- Keep a note of our emergency number in the vehicle and mobile phone: **0800 195 4141**.