

Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

Sept 2013

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

Working Safely Around Power Lines

Recently there were 3 close call incidents involving power lines that potentially could have been very serious:

- After unloading at a mill's log sorting yard, an empty self-loading log truck loaded its trailer and drove out of the yard with the crane boom still extended. The extended boom contacted overhead service lines, which pulled down the utility pole and attached high-voltage power lines.
- A track-mounted log processor was crossing under overhead conductors when the boom of the machine contacted a telecommunications cable. The overhead power lines were not contacted and no injuries were reported.
- A mechanic was testing the brakes on a mobile crane when he inadvertently contacted a 25-kV overhead power line.

Recommended Preventative Actions from Fortis BC:

Remember the safe limits of approach. Electricity can arc or “jump” from the wire to a conducting object like a piece of equipment or a truck. Keep at least 3 meters distance between you and overhead distribution power lines and 6 meters for high voltage transmission lines at all times.

Look up and live. Before you start work, look up and around the site and make sure you and your crew are aware of all overhead lines. Ladders, cranes and pipes are all good conductors of electricity, and remember, it doesn't need to be touching a power line to become energized.

A downed power line is deadly. If you spot a fallen wire, keep at least 10 meters away, even if it doesn't appear to be live. If a wire falls across your vehicle, don't get out—you could become a path for electricity if you touch the ground. If you must get out, hop out clear and land on both feet, then hop or shuffle until you are 10 meters clear of the vehicle.

Be aware of safety hazards below. Call before you dig, phone the local power company to avoid coming into contact with underground cables and service lines. The call is free, and it could save your life.



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You hold their lives in your hands. Safety training is critical and as a supervisor or foreman, you hold your workers' lives in your hands. Don't put them at risk. Ensure that they have the critical safety training they need to go home safely to their families.



To learn more, check out the following resources:

BC Hydro Poster with 3 keys to electrical safety:

<http://www.bchydro.com/content/dam/BCHydro/customer-portal/documents/corporate/safety/3-keys-of-electrical-safety-poster.pdf>

WorkSafeBC's videos on power line safety:

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/Multimedia/videos.asp?ReportID=34818>

Stay safe when power lines are down!

https://www.bchydro.com/news/unplug_this_blog/2012/power-lines-down-safety.html

