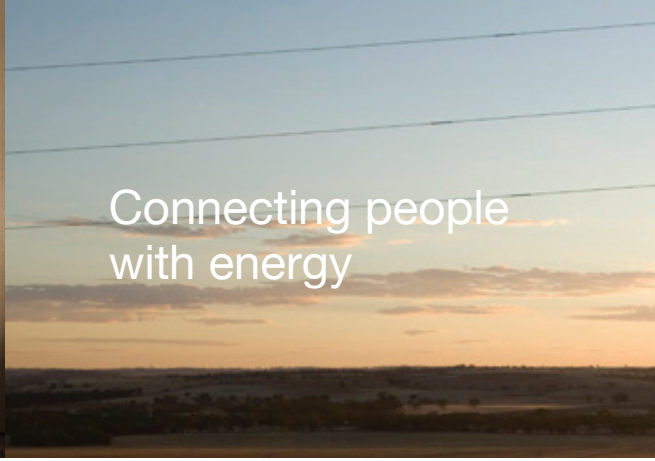


# Working near electricity



Connecting people  
with energy

Whether you are a qualified electrician making changes to your home or garden, or a farmer working the land, every precaution should be taken when working close to powerlines.

Working near powerlines can be extremely dangerous. Every year serious electrical accidents occur when safe work practices are not followed. To protect yourself and others against injury, it is important to plan ahead and ensure that all work can be carried out safely before you begin.

### What possible hazards are there?

The Western Power network is made up of many components. Overhead powerlines are usually easy to see but there are others you should be aware of before you begin your work:

- underground cables
- transformers
- kiosks
- green domes

### How can I work near powerlines safely?

Western Power recommends the following safety guidelines when working near powerlines and other electrical infrastructure.

1. Always assume powerlines are live. If you see a fallen powerline, do not go near it – call 13 13 51 immediately.
2. Do not interfere with powerlines in any way. Contact with powerlines can result in electrocution and power interruptions.
3. Do not touch anything that is touching powerlines, for example tree branches.  
If you touch any part of a tree that is touching a line, you risk serious injury or electrocution.
4. Locate and keep clear of ground based electrical infrastructure such as transformers, kiosks and green domes.
5. Use a safety observer to monitor and warn against any unsafe approach to live equipment or other unsafe conditions. The observer must be competent and have the authority to stop the work if necessary.





**Through the continued expansion and maintenance of Western Power's network, we are helping the State grow and fulfil its bright future.**

## Planning work near powerlines

It's the responsibility of the site owner, company or contractor to ensure that work near overhead or underground powerlines can be carried out safely and that no person, material or equipment involved in the performance of the work is at risk. You expose yourself to extreme hazards if you breach safety regulations and there are also significant penalties which can be applied.

## How do I know if there are underground powerlines?

If your work involves digging, it is essential that you contact 'Dial 1100 Before You Dig' – a free national referral service that gives you information on the locations of underground networks including electricity, gas, communications and water.

This service prevents damage and disruption to underground pipe and cable networks as well as the risk of injury or death that can be associated with this, particularly if the pipes and cables relate to electrical networks. Disrupting a single cable or pipe can also leave an entire community without essential services, and may lead to heavy penalties.

You can also lodge an online enquiry at [1100.com.au](http://1100.com.au).

## Oversized vehicle transportation - Highloads

If you're operating a large vehicle, it's important to ensure the load remains a safe distance from powerlines. Operators of over-height loads greater than 4.3 metres (4.6 metres for livestock vehicles travelling on nominated routes) and over-width loads greater than 5.5 metres must complete a Wide Load Movement Authorisation Form. This needs to be approved by Western Power before operators can seek approval from Main Roads Western Australia.

Once we receive the application, we'll investigate the proposed route and assess potential impact on our equipment. If necessary, we can move or raise powerlines, or provide an escort to ensure that oversized loads are transported safely. Please note that any costs associated with relocation or raising powerlines and escorting high loads are charged to the customer.

For queries about transporting oversize loads, including obtaining the necessary permission, please contact Western Power.



## Fires and powerlines

Every year, fires lit to burn off stubble in paddocks destroy powerlines and power poles causing widespread power failures and unnecessary costs to the community. This can easily be prevented by following some simple precautions.

- Before commencing, clear any vegetation around the base of power poles by at least 1.5 metres.
- Do not rake wind row beneath or adjacent to powerlines or poles.
- Thoroughly wet power pole bases to avoid accidental combustion.
- Check local fire warnings and avoid stubble burning when conditions aren't suitable.
- Carefully monitor the fires to make sure they're not causing problems.
- If a pole is damaged, immediately contact Western Power on 13 13 51.

Many regional and semi-regional areas are particularly susceptible to bushfires. We've worked closely with local authorities and emergency services to develop and implement a range of strategies to protect these areas.

These include ground and aerial patrols, vegetation management and a program to apply silicon to high voltage insulators to prevent pole-top fires.

## If an electrical accident occurs

If you witness an electrical accident, it's important to respond quickly, but with caution.

### Phone 000 for emergency services.

Call Western Power on 13 13 51 to disconnect the power. If powerlines have fallen across a vehicle, tell the occupants to stay inside the vehicle until emergency services arrive. Stand back and urge others to keep a distance of at least six metres from fallen powerlines. Electricity from powerlines can jump or 'arc' through the air and travel to earth through your body, resulting in electrocution. Do not approach the scene until the proper authorities have declared the area safe.

## Need some more help?

If you have any questions or concerns about working near powerlines, please contact Western Power or visit [westernpower.com.au](http://westernpower.com.au)

WorkSafe and EnergySafety can also provide information relating to working safely near electricity.

WorkSafe: 1300 307 877

EnergySafety: 9422 5200



## Contact information

**Faults & emergencies, power interruptions,  
estimated restoration times (24 hrs)**

13 13 51



**Telephone Interpreter Services**

13 14 50

**General enquiries  
(7am - 5pm Monday to Friday)**


13 10 87

**TTY users  
(speech or hearing impaired only)**

1800 13 13 51

[enquiry@westernpower.com.au](mailto:enquiry@westernpower.com.au)  
[westernpower.com.au](http://westernpower.com.au)

363 Wellington Street Perth WA 6000  
GPO Box L921 Perth WA 6842

 This information is available in alternative formats on request.

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