



## Power Line Safety

Power lines are a serious and potentially fatal hazard to workers when safety precautions are not followed.

- Electrocutation remains a major cause of deaths in construction.
- We take electricity for granted both on the jobsite and at home.
- Historically, electrocutation accounts for about 20% of all fatalities in construction.
- Cranes, backhoes, dump trucks, drill rigs and aerial lifts are common types of equipment involved in contacts with overhead power lines.
- Equipment like ladders, tools and tool extensions, and scaffolds are frequently involved.
- Overhead power lines should be located before beginning work.

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### Take these important steps to avoid injury:

1. Initial worksite surveys should include locating and identifying all overhead power lines. The heights of the wires and distance from the worksite should be noted on site diagrams to make sure workers and supervisors are aware.
2. If work must be done near energized lines, contact the local utility company for assistance. The utility company may need to shut down the lines while you are working near them. If overhead lines cannot be shut down, the utility company can install insulation over the lines during the time you will be working near them.
3. Ensure all workers keep conductive materials 10 feet away from unguarded, energized lines up to 50 kilovolts. For every 10 kV over 50, increase distance by an additional 4 inches of clearance.
4. Workers should not operate equipment around overhead power lines unless authorized and trained to do so. Use a spotter.
5. Do not allow use of metal ladders in dangerous situations.
6. Train all workers in emergency communication and proper techniques for providing aid to someone after an electrical accident.

For more information, contact your local power company, OSHA, or your Loss Prevention Representative.