

Important Safety Notice – Queensland Rail



Workplace managers and supervisors must communicate this information to affected workers either face to face, via email or telephone within 72 hours of being received.

Issue date: 08/11/2019

Removal date: 08/11/2020 from the safety and environment notice board.

Look up for powerlines

Attention: All workers (including contractors) and supervisors in charge of heavy machinery (including cranes and excavators)

Two recent incidents in non-electrified railway corridors highlight the importance of actively managing hazards associated with work with machinery near powerlines:

- On 17 October, a sub-contractor moving a crane with its boom raised struck a powerline on a North Coast line project. This caused the powerline to fail, fall to the ground and ignite a fire near the Bruce Highway.
- On 1 November, the boom of an excavator appears to have struck a powerline during vegetation clearing works in Toowoomba. This incident may have caused a grass fire and is under investigation.

These incidents follow an electrocution and a serious injury south of Cairns during July 2019. This accident involved contact with a powerline while a crane lifted rails during work on a (third party owned) railway line.



Contact with powerlines can lead to electrocution, arcing burns, electric shock and substantial fires. On the spot fines may be applied by safety regulator inspectors when inadequate management of work is identified near powerlines.

All workers and supervisors in charge of heavy machinery must observe the following minimum electrical safety requirements:

1. When planning to operate machinery, identify powerlines in the area as part of your plan and Pre-Start Brief.
2. Comply with relevant exclusion zones for powerlines and appoint safety observers when required.
3. Discuss with relevant workers the following topics to help plan work near powerlines:
 - a. Play and discuss [“this video”](#) describing Exclusion zones and the Safety Observer role (also found at: www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/forms-and-resources/films/electrical-exclusion-zones).
 - b. A [Look Up and Live](#) online mapping application (www.lookupandlive.com.au) that pinpoints the location of powerlines across the state is available to help you plan work safely and request electrical safety guidance (from the entity in control of the powerline) when required.
 - c. If you need advice to plan work near powerlines or to report incidents (outside electrified railways) **call Ergon on 13 74 66, or Energex on 131253.**

Further electrical safety information can be found as follows:

- **For work in electrified railways:** Undertake the WET (Working in electrified territory) training and read MD-10-191 Module 2 ([Electric Traction Systems Standard – Working on and near electric traction infrastructure](#)).
- **For work outside electrified railways:** Read MD-16-696 ([Working on and near low voltage installations standard](#)) and relevant [Electrical Safety Codes of Practice](#).



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