



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 22 (VERNON)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Electrical Limits of Approach SWP 017

Know your limits and stay back from power lines

If you're working near power lines, stay back from lines and keep equipment and ladders away. And call BC One Call at 1 800 474 6886 before digging or excavating.

If you work around electricity, know the 3 keys of electrical safety:

1. **Look up and down:** Plan your work so you can avoid contact with power lines. Make sure you look for power lines overhead and underground.
2. **Stay back:** If you're working around power lines, keep a safe distance from the lines. You should be at least 10 metres (33 feet) away from the lines and your equipment should be at least 6 metres (20 feet) away. Use a spotter to make sure you're maintaining this minimum safe distance.
3. **Call for help:** If you come across a fallen power line, an exposed underground power line, or any object comes into contact with a power line, stay back 10 metres (33 feet) and call 911. If your equipment contacts a line, stay calm and stay still until help arrives.

What's a safe distance from power lines?

Electricity can flow through objects that are touching energized power lines. But electricity can also move across a gap from a line to an object that is close by.

The minimum safe distance to prevent this from happening is called a "limit of approach" and it is determined by:

- The range of voltage in the line
- The experience of the worker
- And the equipment being used.



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These distances apply not just to workers, but to tools, machines or other equipment. If you will be working near sources of high-voltage electricity, you must follow these limits of approach.

WorkSafeBC's general limits of approach

VOLTAGE PHASE TO PHASE	MINIMUM DISTANCE	
	METRES	FEET
Over 750 V to 75 kV	3	10
Over 75 kV to 250 kV	4.5	15
Over 250 kV to 550 kV	6	20

If you don't know the voltage of a power line, stay back at least 10 metres (33 feet) and wait for a BC Hydro representative to arrive and verify your limit of approach

If you need to work inside a limit of approach

Call BC Hydro at 1 877 520 1355. We will work with you to determine what steps are necessary to protect you and our electrical system. You may need to complete WorkSafeBC's form 30M33 [PDF, 201 KB] and we can help you.

- BC Hydro's Electric Service Coordination Centre: 1 877 520 1355.