

# Floods and transmission line safety



Safety is essential every day for our landholders, community, first responders and our people.

## About this brochure

This brochure provides important safety information to remain safe around flood waters.

**You need to maintain a safe distance from our transmission line conductors (wires), this is called an exclusion zone. There are three different zones: three metres, six metres and ten metres, depending on the voltage of the line. An exclusion zone of six metres applies to most of our network.**

## General safety information

**Be safe:** Always assume all transmission lines, in the air or fallen are live - do not approach them. If transmission lines are blown over or damaged by a cyclone, severe storm or flood water they can be dangerous. If transmission lines are touching the ground or closer to the ground or water level due to damage or flood water heights, it is important to keep well away. Electricity from a transmission line conductor can flashover (arc) or jump through the air to earth and potentially through your body, resulting in electrocution.

**Keep people away:** If you are the first person to notice fallen towers or transmission lines in a flooded area, stay well clear (at least 10 metres in distance), and make sure bystanders are also kept back until Emergency Services and Powerlink representatives arrive. Explain that until the lines are tested and proven safe, by an electricity authority, people should stay well clear.

**Never approach:** High voltages (up to as high as 330,000 volts) are distributed over our transmission network and can cause flashover (or jump) to earth which can result in injury or death and damage to equipment, and property.

**Call Triple Zero (000):** Tell the operator it is a life threatening situation and advise them that the transmission lines or towers are down.

**Call Powerlink:** If transmission lines are down or much lower than usual call emergency services then call us on 1800 353 031.

## Safe working habits with vehicles

Flood waters can move fast, so never try to drive over roads that have water over them. You can still be exposed to electrical risks even within vehicles. If a fallen transmission line lands on an occupied vehicle or gets caught under a vehicle always stay in the vehicle until the lines are proven safe.

If it is unsafe to stay, jump clear with both feet together jumping until at least 10 metres away, avoiding any contact with the vehicle and any fallen transmission lines or components.

## Safe behaviour for boat users

Treat all electrical equipment as live until advised otherwise by an electricity authority. Boat users must exercise greater caution when approaching overhead transmission lines. Boats used in flood conditions may unintentionally come closer to overhead transmission lines than in normal conditions. As flood levels change, boat users are urged to look out for any transmission lines in particular fallen or sagging transmission lines.

For your safety you need to keep your boat at a horizontal distance of 12 metres minimum from any transmission tower or overhead transmission line.

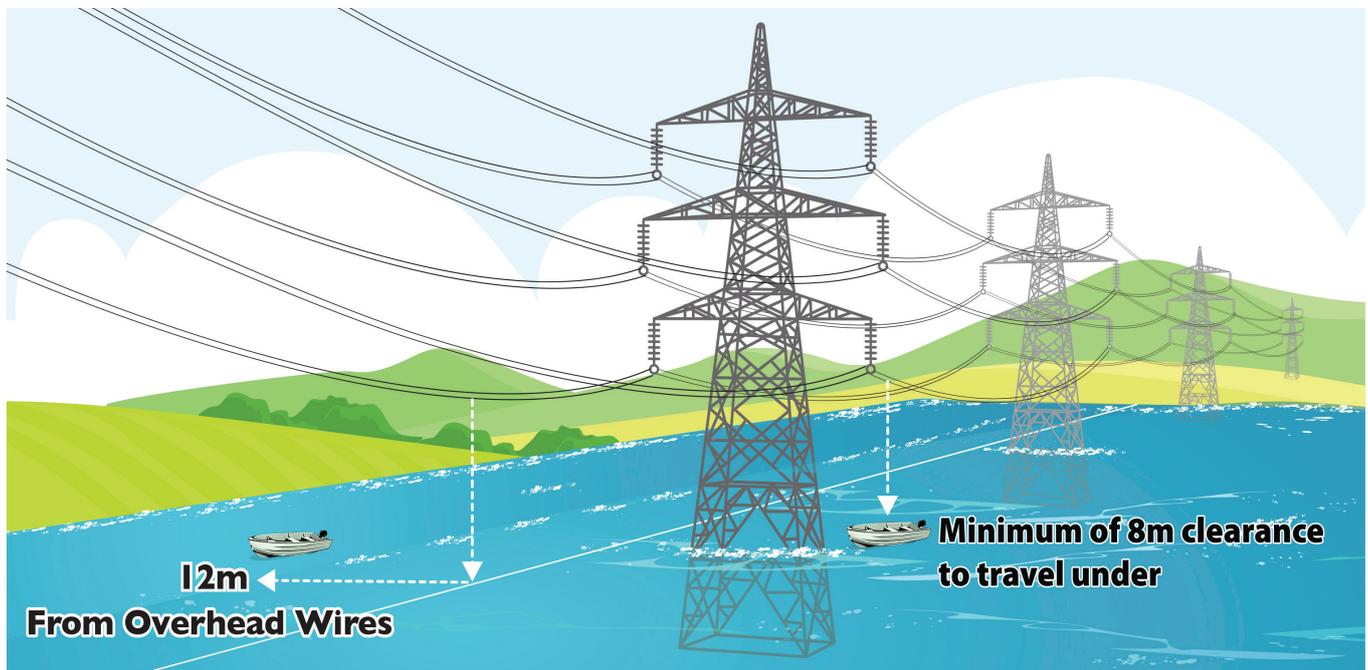
You can only come closer than 12 metres if you have contacted us and we have confirmed that there is more than eight metres vertical clearance from the highest point on your boat to the lowest point of the overhead transmission line. Maintain a safe distance from transmission lines at all times. Do not steer your boat across transmission lines that are in the water.

If you are in a boat and the transmission lines fall into or across your boat, do not touch them. Do not get out of the boat as you may be creating an electrical path for the electricity to pass through to ground. Call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

If your boat is wooden or fibreglass, do not touch the water or metallic parts of the motor when near fallen transmission lines. There is potential that the electricity is still present and may present a further danger.

Trees fallen across the power lines could also be live. Do not try to pull trees or branches clear. It is not safe to use an oar to push away, lift or move transmission lines.

Only cross under an overhead transmission line when there is at least eight metres clearance between the highest point of the boat to the lowest overhead transmission line. Should there be any doubt whether the distance is eight meters or more, contact us for advice. As a general rule do not cross under transmission lines unless it is an emergency and there is at least eight metres height separation between the top of your boat and the bottom of the lines. And stay at least 12 metres horizontally away from the overhead line.



### After the flood

Be aware that towers carrying transmission lines may have suffered damage and can be dangerous. Stay away from them until they have been proven safe by an electricity authority.

As a result of flood waters, transmission towers may become unstable, fall or cause overhead lines to sag. Sagging overhead transmission lines may still be live or energised. Underground cables may become exposed by erosion or damaged. Any of these can pose risk of electrical shock to people, boats in flood waters and vehicles and machinery.

All our transmission structures have signs to indicate that they are a Powerlink asset with contact details. Beware that during flooding these signs may be under water or illegible due to damage caused by flooding.

### Contact Us

Further information about Powerlink and our projects can be downloaded from [www.powerlink.com.au](http://www.powerlink.com.au)

General Enquiries FREECALL 1800 635 369 (during business hours) and ask for Property Services

In case of emergency FREECALL 1800 353 031 (24 hours, 7 days a week)

Email [Property@powerlink.com.au](mailto:Property@powerlink.com.au)

[www.powerlink.com.au](http://www.powerlink.com.au) | [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [v](#)



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Everyone. Everywhere. Everyday.