

PLAN. LOOK. ACT.

Powerline safety conversation guide



SAFE FOR LIFE
Everyone. Everywhere. Everyday.





PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

To support proactive safety conversations about working near overhead and underground powerlines.

POWERLINES IN EVERYDAY WORK

Powerlines are often part of familiar work environments, but the risk they pose is not always obvious – especially when vehicles, machinery, and equipment are operating nearby.

As an example, high voltage electricity can arc through the air, so direct contact with a powerline is not required for a serious incident to occur.

A REAL INCIDENT, REAL CONSEQUENCES

The photos included in this guide are drawn from a real incident. This incident occurred when a crane was operated within the exclusion zone of a 110kV (110,000-volt) overhead powerline.

Although no injuries were reported, the potential consequence was for multiple fatalities. The incident resulted in significant damage to the crane, the vehicle, a nearby warehouse and critical powerline infrastructure.

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/planlookact to watch the video.





i Vehicle-mounted crane operated within the exclusion zone of 110kV powerline



i Work location directly under powerlines



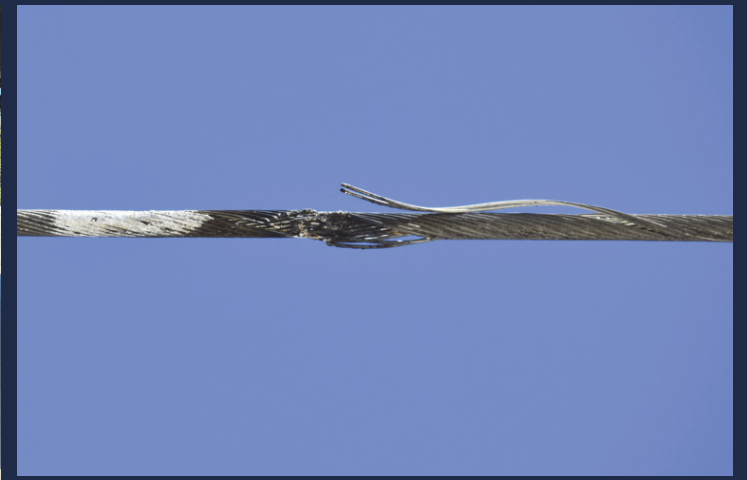
i Nearby warehouse damage



i Nearby warehouse switchboard damage



i Vehicle damage



i Powerline critical infrastructure damage

PLAN. LOOK. ACT.

Powerline Safety Framework

Planning is crucial to working safely around powerlines. Before you begin work, PLAN. LOOK. ACT. Simple actions can lead to safer outcomes.

PLAN

Check for overhead and underground powerlines before starting work.

Use the Look Up and Live map (lookupandlive.com), and Before You Dig Australia (byda.com.au) to locate powerlines, identify the owner, and determine exclusion zones (Figure 1).

If your work could enter an exclusion zone, or disturb the ground around the network, conduct a risk assessment, and contact the powerline owner for free safety advice before you start.

LOOK

Look UP, look DOWN, look ALL around for powerlines.

Treat all powerlines as energised.

Stay clear of damaged, sagging or fallen powerlines.

ACT

Implement effective controls to prevent people, vehicles, machinery and equipment entering exclusion zones, and from contacting underground powerlines.

Follow your risk assessment and any safety advice provided by the powerline owner.

If your vehicle or machine contacts a powerline, STAY–CALL–WAIT (Figure 2).

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Conversation starters

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS INCIDENT?

- Looking at the photos, what stands out to you?
- What were the actual consequences of this incident?
- What could have been the consequences, and who or what could have been affected?

Conversation starters

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR WORK?

- Where are powerlines commonly encountered in our work activities?
- How do we identify overhead and underground powerlines before work starts?
- If powerlines are identified near the work area, what actions should be taken before work begins?
- How can we confirm the location, voltage, owner and exclusion zones of nearby powerlines?
- What would we do if our work could enter an exclusion zone, or disturb the ground around the network?
- What controls are needed to prevent people, vehicles, machinery or equipment entering an exclusion zone, or contacting underground powerlines?
- What changes in the work environment, task or conditions might require us to stop and reassess?

Conversation starters

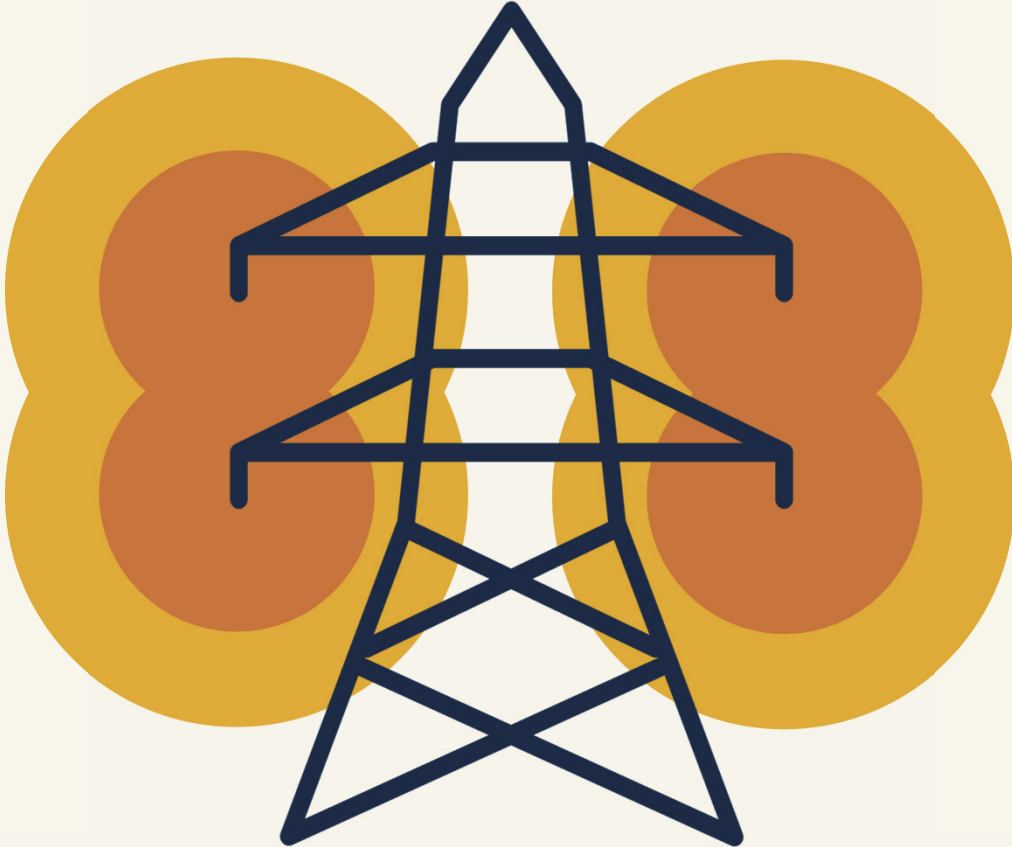
WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

- If a vehicle or machine contacts a powerline, what action should be taken?

WHAT WILL WE DO DIFFERENTLY?

- What is the most important takeaway from today's conversation?
- Is there anything we need to do differently before starting work near powerlines?

Figure 1: Exclusion zones



Up to 132kV
3m EXCLUSION ZONE



Above 132kV and up to 330kV
6m EXCLUSION ZONE



Zero damage - Zero harm - Zero disruption

Figure 1: STAY-CALL-WAIT emergency guidance

