

## Staying Safe Around Downed Power Lines

Downed power lines are most common after storms and high winds, but can also occur while on the job. For safety's sake, treat every downed power line as though it's energized.



### If you are around downed power lines:

- **Call 911 and Eversource to report the** downed line.
- **Stay away—even if they don't hum or** spark, downed power lines can be live and dangerous.
- **Shuffle...don't run! Carefully move** away from the line and anything it is touching, and instruct others in the area to do the same. The correct technique for moving away from a downed line is to shuffle with your feet together and on the ground. Fight the urge to run—if you run or take large steps, you increase the chance that electricity could come up one leg and go out the other, and you could be seriously injured.

### If equipment comes in contact with a power line:

- **Have a co-worker immediately call 911** and Eversource.
- **Warn others to stay away.** When equipment hits a line, workers standing on the ground are in the greatest danger.
- **If you must get off the equipment due** to fire or other danger, land far enough away from the equipment so that you don't touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. *Land with your feet together and shuffle away, keeping your feet together and on the ground.*
- **Stay on the equipment until rescue** workers say it is safe to get off.
- **If there is no immediate danger and you** can do so safely, move the equipment away from the line.

### If a co-worker hits a power line while working:

- **Immediately call 911 and Eversource.**
- **To ensure everyone's safety, do not** attempt to rescue your co-worker.
- **Stay away until rescue workers assure you** the power has been turned off—if you touch someone who is in contact with electricity, or their vehicle or a tool they're holding, you could be shocked as well.

*Never underestimate  
the power of electricity...  
Make safety your top priority*

## For More Information

To learn more, contact Eversource at the numbers listed below, then press "5" for Construction Services:

Connecticut: **888-544-4826**

Eastern Massachusetts: **888-633-3797**

Western Massachusetts: **800-880-2433**

New Hampshire: **800-362-7764**

Visit [Eversource.com](https://www.eversource.com) for videos and other safety information.



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# Safety Tips for Contractors Working Near Power Lines

**Look out for overhead  
and underground  
power lines!**



**EVERSOURCE**



Whether you operate heavy equipment or use ladders and handheld tools on the jobsite, it's critical that you keep a safe distance from all power lines and electrical equipment while you work—at least 10 feet, and possibly more depending on voltage.

**Before beginning work:**

- **Call Eversource to determine voltage** and safe working distances (see *OSHA Minimum Safe Working Distances chart for phone numbers in your state*).
- **Assess and document your surroundings**, searching carefully for overhead power lines, poles, and guy wires, as well as lines that may be obscured from view by trees or buildings.
- **Always assume that all nearby overhead, underground, and building service lines are energized.**
- **If you will be digging, ensure safe** excavations by first calling 811—the toll-free underground hazards hotline.

**MAKE ELECTRICAL SAFETY A PRIORITY OF YOUR PLAN!**

Before any work begins, be sure everyone working with you or who will be in the area knows where overhead and underground lines are located.

Power lines are not insulated, so if you touch one with your body, your equipment, or your tools, you or someone else in the immediate area could become seriously injured or killed. Electrical accidents can happen even without direct contact.

**OSHA Minimum Safe Working Distances from Exposed Energized Parts (including overhead lines) for Non-Qualified Personnel**

Nominal Voltage Phase-to-Phase (V)	Minimum Working Distance in Feet
0 to 50,000	10
Over 50,000 to 200,000	15
Over 200,000 to 345,000	20

Remember, as voltage increases, the need for greater clearance from the power source also increases. Crane distances could be greater. Consult OSHA regulations for further workplace safety guidance at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

**For assistance with determining voltage and safe working distances, please contact Eversource.**

- Connecticut: **888-544-4826**
- Eastern Massachusetts: **888-633-3797**
- Western Massachusetts: **800-880-2433**
- New Hampshire: **800-362-7764**

**Avoiding Crane, Ladder, and Overhead Hazards**

Before beginning any overhead work involving cranes, derricks, or ladders, call Eversource in your state to verify voltage ratings at your location and safe working distances from power lines and equipment (see *OSHA Minimum Safe Working Distances chart*). In addition:

- **Be sure to comply with all OSHA** requirements and applicable state and federal safety regulations, including OSHA's crane standard (For complete details, visit: [www.osha.gov/SLTC/cranehoistsafety/standards.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/cranehoistsafety/standards.html)).
- **Be sure to use tape, signs, or barricades** to keep workers and equipment the required distance away from power lines and equipment.

**When working with cranes or derricks:**

- **Keep the crane boom and load at least 20 feet** away from the line, and always assume the line is energized.
- **Partner with a dedicated spotter on the ground** to help you stay clear of overhead lines, and make sure it's your spotter's *only responsibility* until your work is complete.
- **Keep vehicles clear of the work area**, especially high-rise equipment like long-bed trucks and concrete mixers that can come in contact with overhead power lines.

**When working on ladders or using long tools:**

- **Call Eversource to determine voltage and safe working distances.**
- **Maintain a safe distance of at least 10 feet** from overhead power lines carrying up to 50 kV. *If you are unsure of the voltage, contact Eversource in your state.*



- **Carry ladders, paint rollers, rain gutters,** and other long objects so that they are parallel to the ground.
- **As voltage increases, clearance distances** also increase, so before adjusting ladders or other long tools, add your own height and make sure the total height will remain a safe distance of *at least 10 feet* away from overhead lines of 50 kV or less.

**Avoiding Underground and Digging Hazards**

- **Ensure safe excavations, and avoid being held liable for damages—dial 811 before you dig.** You'll learn whether underground cables and utilities are in your work area, and where they're located.
- **If an underground power line is exposed or damaged,** secure the site and maintain a safe distance.
- **Once safety precautions have been taken,** call Eversource at the appropriate number listed on the back.
- **Never attempt to open underground equipment.** Call Eversource in your state.