

# Customerline

**“Keeping customers informed”**

## **Watch Out for the Shocking Overheads**

Its summertime - ah, yes, that time of year when we decide to paint our houses or roofs, trim our trees and do general property maintenance. Or, if you are a boat-owner, you'll be looking at heading out to a lake or seashore for your holidays. But before you start putting up scaffolding or thinking about the route you'll take to the lake, be aware of the hazards involving overhead powerlines - at work, at home, and at play.

In general, overhead electricity lines are not insulated and if contact – or near contact - is made with them by anything capable of conducting electricity – including fishing rods & lines, kites or model plane controls, the electricity will pass through the object with the risk of injuring or killing anyone holding or near to the object. Be aware that a truck, crane, forklift, irrigation pipe, marquee, boat mast (ashore or on the water) or even a tall ladder accidentally touching an overhead power line can lead to serious injury or death. If you are planning some home maintenance over the holidays such as painting or trimming trees, be careful when you are working in the vicinity of power lines where they enter your house. These lines are not safe to touch.

### **Follow these overhead powerlines safety tips for a safe summer:**

- If you are handling any tall object near power lines, keep an eye on what is above you - don't let it come in contact with power lines. You should keep yourself and any objects you are handling, at least four metres away from overhead power lines.
- Watch out for what's below - make sure you check for the presence of any underground gas, power or water services before you dig.
- Consult with Northpower before carrying out any work close to lines, including work from a position on your roof, ladder or scaffold. Plan your work and arrange to have the power disconnected, if necessary.
- Plant trees well away from power lines and keep branches trimmed before they get too close. Before installing a clothesline, TV antenna or other high structure, check for clearance of power lines.
- If you are operating any electrical equipment outdoors, always use a Residual Current Device (RCD) or an isolating transformer.
- Before boating, know the height of your aerials and masts above land when towing and above water when sailing. Check any land routes, launching and sailing areas for crossing wires or signs about these. Keep boat movement on shore with your masts or aerials up to a minimum. Take action to avoid high parts of your boat intruding into an unsafe distance from overhead wires, and always heed the information on signs where these are displayed. Remember, high voltage electricity can jump to your mast or aerial if they get near enough to a wire, and the power can then burn or kill you or those nearby.

**All power and hot water faults  
call  
Northpower 4301800**