

Staying safe near a downed power line

Overhead power lines, transformers, and other electrical equipment carry enough electrical power to cause serious injury or death if we make contact with them, or get too close. They are also susceptible to damage from major weather events, accidental contacts, and other incidents. If there has been a wind storm or a car accident that causes a power line to fall down from a power pole, it is important to understand the dangers and to know what to do in an emergency.

The danger of downed power lines is not always immediately obvious. The power lines may show no signs of being energized - they may not jump around or spark like you see in the movies. However, they can still cause serious injury or death if you come into contact with one. Here's how to stay safe if you encounter a downed power line.

Stay back at least 10 metres

It is important to keep a safe distance from downed power lines. Stay back at least 10 metres (33 feet). Do not attempt to help someone who is in contact with, or closer than, 10 metres of a downed power line. Helping that person will put your life at risk too.

Call 911 and keep everyone else at least 10 metres away. It is important to maintain that 10 metres to ensure no other injuries occur.

Shuffle away from the downed power line

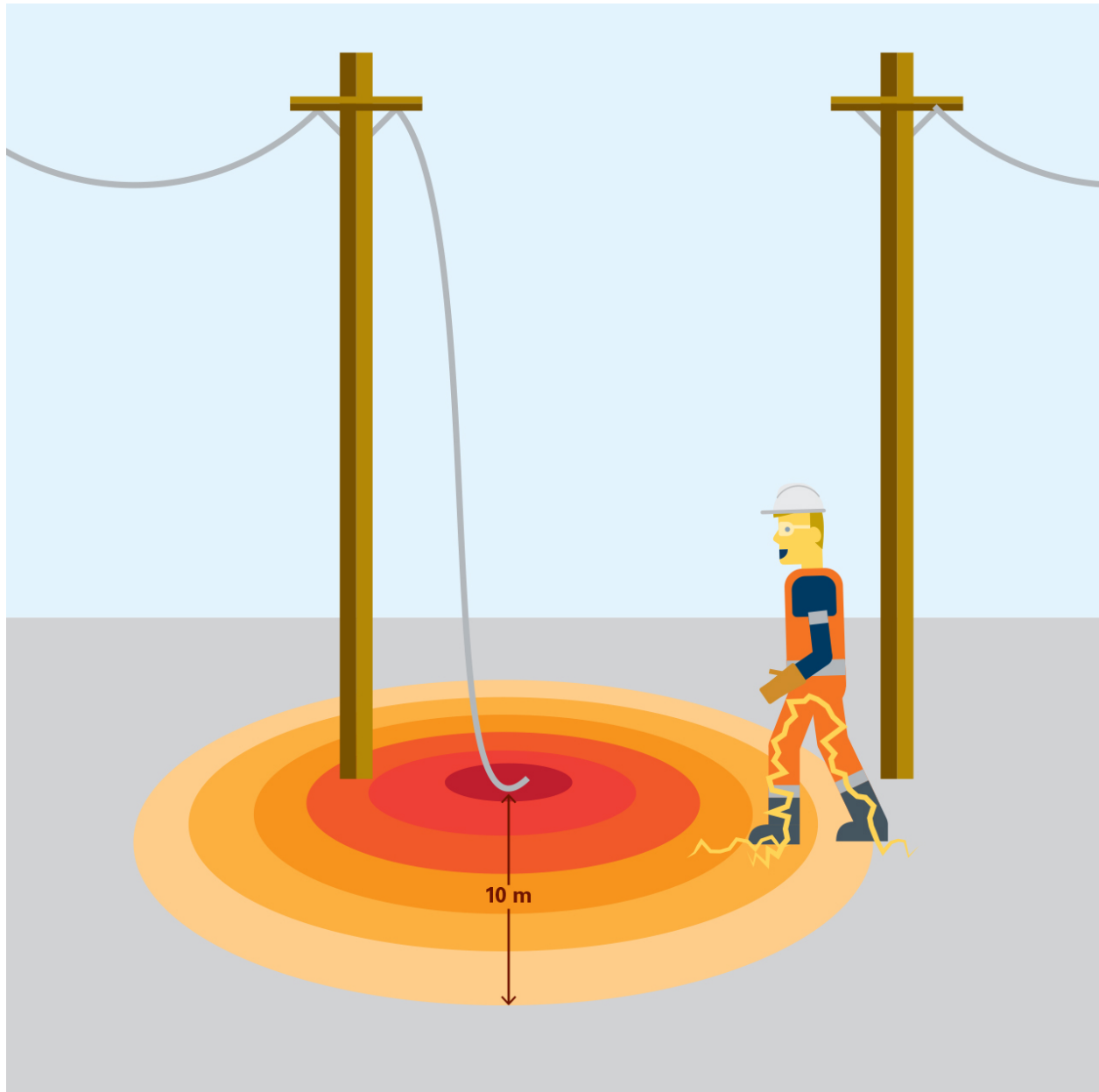
Electricity travels through the ground in waves that lose power as they spread further away from the point of contact. This decrease in energy in the ground is called step potential. It's also what can cause you to get hurt, if you don't shuffle away from the power line.

If you are less than 10 metres away from a power line making contact with the ground or other object, shuffle at least 10 metres (33 feet) away. Keep both feet together and on the ground at all times. Don't lift either foot off the ground.

If you try and walk away from the power line instead of shuffling with your feet together, there is a chance that you step into two different voltages at the same time. This is dangerous because electricity will always move from the

more powerful voltage to the less powerful one and it will use you to get there increasing your chances of being shocked or electrocuted.

Once you are at least 10 metres away, call 911 or EPCOR Power Emergencies at [\(780\) 412-4500](tel:7804124500) to report the downed line.



Vehicles and downed powerlines

A downed power line on a vehicle is a serious issue, do not drive over a downed power line at any time. If your [vehicle or equipment struck the power](#)

[line](#), and it is not tangled in the line, slowly drive away. If you can't move your vehicle and it is safe to do so, stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. Your vehicle protects you from the risk of electric shock from a downed power line. As long as you are not in imminent danger (e.g. car is on fire) you are safest inside your vehicle.

Report a downed power line

Call 911 or Power Emergencies immediately and tell them the exact location of the line.

Power Emergencies

Ph: [\(780\) 412-4500](tel:7804124500)

Call us 24/7

We'll dispatch an EPCOR trouble truck to turn off the power and ensure the area is safe.