Hazard ALERT

Incident Alert

While clearing brush and trees from a power line right of way, a worker cut down a tree causing it to fall onto an energized overhead power line. When the power line fell to the ground, an electrical current passed to another worker near the work site. The affected worker received severe electrical burns and shock from contact with the electrical conductor.

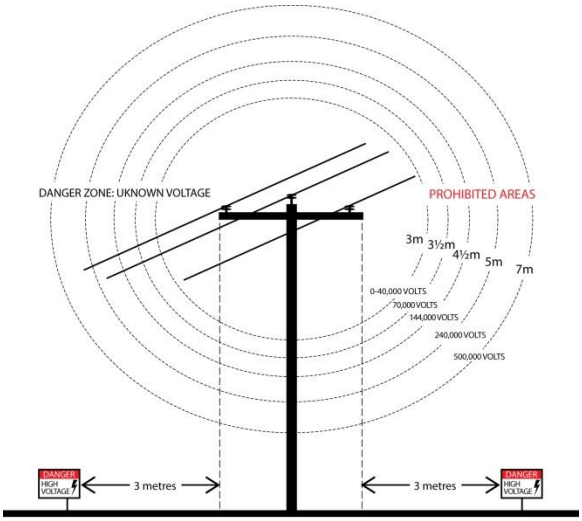
Hazard Summary – Working Near Power Lines:

Working near energized power lines poses great danger and can result in death. Workers performing any work in the vicinity of power lines must receive proper training to understand how to minimize risks.

Defined Danger Zones (unknown voltage) and Prohibited Areas (identified voltages) require specific precautions.

Safe Work Practices:

1. No worker or equipment shall work within the Danger Zone (within three metres of any overhead power line) without notifying the local power company: Northwest Territories Power Corporation; Northland Utilities – Yellowknife; or Northland Utilities – Hay River.
2. No unqualified worker shall enter the Prohibited Zone.
3. Work in the vicinity of power lines requires a designated qualified observer/signaller to ensure workers and equipment maintain safe approach distances from power lines. The observer must be able to clearly communicate to workers by radio or air horn.
4. Brushing work around power lines can only be done during daylight hours.
5. Before starting work or any other activity in the vicinity of power lines, contact the local power company to establish safe approach distances and required safety precautions.
6. Do not place earth or other materials under or next to a power line if it reduces clearance to the power line.
7. Do not push snow or other materials at power line poles.
8. Do not excavate or perform other similar work near overhead power lines if it reduces the support for the power line.



Maintain 3 metres of complete clearance

The greater the voltage, the greater the distance one needs to maintain from the line. Unqualified workers must remain more than three metres from the power line.