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## Be prepared for unpredictable weather

Essential Energy is reminding residents to prepare their properties for the upcoming storm season amid predictions of above-average extreme weather conditions in the lead up to summer.

General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, advised householders to remove debris from around homes, clear gutters, and keep trees a safe distance from powerlines to help reduce the risk of storm damage.

“The traditional storm season occurs from October through to March and often brings heavy rain, hail and strong winds which can cause considerable damage to buildings, trees and Essential Energy’s electricity network,” David said.

“Most storm-related power outages are caused by tree branches and debris being blown into overhead powerlines.

“In these situations, residents are reminded to keep at least eight metres clear of fallen powerlines or any objects in contact with them and always assume the wires are live.”

Following a storm event, Essential Energy recommends remaining vigilant for damaged powerlines and other electrical equipment that may be hidden by fallen tree branches and debris.

“Indicators of potential damage to powerlines include flickering or loss of power supply, fire or scorched areas, injured or deceased stock, and fallen trees,” David said.

“Always stay at least eight metres away from fallen powerlines and report the fault immediately to Essential Energy on **13 20 80**.”

Essential Energy recommends households have a storm emergency kit ready that includes:

- ✓ a torch with a supply of batteries
- ✓ candles and waterproof matches
- ✓ a portable radio with spare batteries to keep you informed of the situation
- ✓ non-perishable food, a can opener, and fresh drinking water
- ✓ spare warm dry clothing
- ✓ a first aid kit and essential medications
- ✓ a list of emergency contact numbers, including Essential Energy’s **13 20 80** number

For more information about electrical safety during storms, visit [essentialenergy.com.au/safety](http://essentialenergy.com.au/safety) or contact Essential Energy on **13 23 91**.

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Essential Energy is the operator of Australia’s largest electricity network spanning 95 per cent of New South Wales’ land mass. Owned by the New South Wales Government, Essential Energy also provides water and sewerage services to customers in far western New South Wales.