

12 January 2017

Electrical safety advice for watercraft

Essential Energy is encouraging boat owners to be aware of the location of powerlines both above and below the water and stay safe on the waterways this summer.

General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, reminded recreational boaters, sailors, and fishers that electricity can arc from powerlines to boat masts, crane jibs, aerials and other tall structures and equipment.

“Always check electricity warning signage and know the height of your vessel before taking to the water,” David said.

“Be mindful of overhead powerlines when transporting, launching and retrieving vessels, particularly around boat ramps and marinas.”

Essential Energy advises boat owners that clearance heights can vary depending on weather conditions and water levels.

“Powerlines can sag in extreme heat and sway in windy conditions, while clearances may be reduced after floods and king tides,” David said.

“If in doubt, don’t risk it, keep well clear and manoeuvre away from the powerlines.”

Submarine cables cross river and creek beds and are indicated by large signs at the point of entry and exit.

“Anchoring is prohibited within 200 metres of submarine cables as anchors can become caught or tangled during an unintentional drift,” David said.

If a boat does contact powerlines, the occupants should remain in the vessel – never jump in the water.

“If your boat is made of fibreglass, do not touch any metal parts, including the mast or guys that are in contact with the powerline,” David said.

“The safest approach is to stay in the boat and dial 000 – always carry a mobile phone or two-way radio in case you need to contact emergency services.”

For further electrical safety information, visit essentialenergy.com.au/safety or contact 13 23 91.

Media contact: Simone Plews

Corporate Media Manager, 02 6588 6733 or 0457 514 993