

Media Release



12 October 2016

Three crop spraying incidents in one day

Essential Energy is reminding farmers and contractors to Look Up and Live when spraying crops near the electricity network after three incidents of spray rigs contacting powerlines on the same day in the State's north.

General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, said the three incidents of spray rigs being unfolded or manoeuvred into powerlines had occurred in the Moree, Narrabri, and Goondiwindi areas – putting operators' lives at risk.

"We've seen a flurry of crop activity following the recent rainfall and these incidents serve as a reminder that machinery operators need to be aware of the location of electrical infrastructure and work safely around it," David said.

"Fortunately, no one was injured in these incidents, however, damage to the electricity network can pose a safety risk to machinery operators and the general public, and cause inconvenience to customers through unplanned power outages."

Essential Energy encourages all workers to complete a daily written risk assessment to identify powerlines and to implement measures to ensure the safety of all. For more information, visit: essentialenergy.com.au/agribusiness.

"We also recommend appointing an onsite safety observer to monitor movements of machinery around powerlines and other network infrastructure," David said.

"Remember that powerlines can be hard to see at dawn, dusk and in overcast weather, and can sag in the heat and sway in the wind so those working near them need to stay alert at all times."

If powerlines are contacted or damaged, remain calm, stay in the vehicle and contact Essential Energy immediately on **13 20 80** or Triple-0 (**000**) if the situation is life threatening.

"Always treat powerlines as 'live' and keep at least eight metres away from the wires or anything touching them," David said.

To obtain maps detailing the location of Essential Energy's overhead electricity network, visit: essentialenergy.com.au/overhead or contact **13 23 91**.

Media contact: Simone Plews, Corporate Media Manager
02 6588 6733 or 0457 514 993

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 also provides water and sewerage services to customers in far western New South Wales.