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Minimise high load risks around powerlines

Truck drivers and operators of vehicles carrying high loads are advised to put safety first when travelling near Essential Energy's overhead electricity network.

Essential Energy's General Manager Safety, HR and Environment, David Nardi, said planning was the key to minimising the high load transportation risks around powerlines.

"Trucks, heavy machinery and vehicles with high loads are at greater risk of contacting powerlines which can result in electric shock, injury or death," David said.

"Operators should ensure any machinery is transported in the lowered position and loads are firmly secured to minimise the risk of movement during the trip.

"Drivers transporting loads higher than 4.6 metres should contact Essential Energy on 13 23 91 so we can verify the overhead powerline heights along their planned travel route."

Essential Energy encourages drivers and machinery operators to stay alert, visually check powerlines before passing underneath them and look out for damaged or low wires.

"Accidents can happen anywhere – on the farm, on the road and especially after extreme heat and windy conditions which can cause powerlines to sag or sway," David said.

If a high load contacts powerlines, operators should:

- Remain calm and stay in the vehicle
- Contact Essential Energy immediately on 13 20 80 or emergency services on Triple-0 (000)
- Only leave the vehicle when the power has been isolated and you have been advised that it is safe to do so.

"Fallen powerlines and anything in contact with them should always be treated as 'live' and people should remain at least eight metres clear of these at all times," David said.

To apply for a high load permit or to access electrical safety information, fact sheets and a free instructional safety DVD, visit essentialenergy.com.au/safety or call **13 23 91**.

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