

## Toolbox talks

### Overhead services

<p><b>Background information:</b></p> <p>Contact with overhead electric lines is a regular cause of death and injury. It is essential that the hazards arising from overhead lines are appreciated and adequate precautions taken.</p>
<p><b>Hazards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrocution from contact with or from current, arcing across from overhead power lines</li> <li>• Disruption to hospitals and emergency services and the general public following damage to electricity cables.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and safety points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You do not have to touch an overhead line to get electrocuted. If the line voltage is high enough, current will arc across to metallic objects or persons if they are close</li> <li>• Wet weather enables electricity to arc greater distances</li> <li>• No plant, equipment or materials should be brought closer than - 15m of overhead lines suspended from steel towers or 9m of lines supported on wooden poles – or as specified by the line owner</li> <li>• In cases where closer approach is required it is necessary to either have the lines made dead or to erect barriers</li> <li>• Carrying scaffold poles, ladders or roofing sheets can result in electrocution if you are too close to power lines</li> <li>• Be aware that electricity lines are often suspended from the same poles as telephone lines</li> <li>• The electricity or railway company will advise on precautions to be taken</li> <li>• Barriers and 'goalposts' are there for your safety – Do not take short cuts around them</li> <li>• Crane jibs, excavator arms etc will need to be tied or other means used to prevent upward travel while passing below overhead power lines</li> <li>• If an overhead line is damaged in any way, stay well clear and call the electricity company immediately</li> <li>• Tipping wagons near overhead lines should be avoided.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Question time:</b></p> <p>Q What is the minimum safe distance for plant working in the vicinity of electricity lines suspended from steel pylons?</p> <p>Q What should you consider if working close to railways?</p>
<p><b>Have you got any questions?</b></p> <p>Record questions on the attendance sheet.</p>
<p><b>Safety reminder:</b></p> <p><b>Always follow procedures when working close to power lines. Observe barriers and use 'goal posts'. Remember that carrying equipment and materials too close to power lines can result in electrocution.</b></p>