



Knowing Safety is POWERful

As I often say, it takes all of us working together to have safe power in our communities. We need to keep items from contacting overhead power lines, we don't want to block the underground cabinets, and we call 811 before we dig. Yet, we continue to have some misconceptions about our powerlines. So, it's time to know the facts. Because, when you know the facts about power, you then know safety!

MYTH: To get a shock or burn, I need to actually touch a powerline.

FACT: Just getting too close could cause a severe shock, burn or even death. Electricity can jump or 'arc' through the air to you or any object that gets too close. Always stay at least 10 feet away from powerlines.

MYTH: If I'm wearing rubber boots or safety boots, I won't get a shock.

FACT: Even safety boots rated for electrical work may not provide 100% protection from shock. Always avoid contacting or coming too close to powerlines.

MYTH: I can use a wooden stick to prop up a powerline or knock down a toy that's tangled in a powerline.

FACT: Even wood can conduct electricity. Never touch or come close to a powerline. Contact your cooperative if you need help.

MYTH: A fallen powerline doesn't have electricity flowing through it, so it's safe to be near it or move it out of the way.

FACT: Always assume a downed powerline still has electricity flowing through it, even if it isn't sparking or making noise. Stay back at least 33 feet, call 9-1-1 and your cooperative.

MYTH: If an overhead power line falls on my car, I should get out and run to safety right away.

FACT: The car and the ground around it may be electrified and you could be killed if you get out of the vehicle. Stay inside until the utility workers tell you it's safe to get out. Tell everyone to stay back 33 feet, about the length of a school bus.

However, only exit the vehicle if you must get out to stay safe (such as a fire), but follow these steps:

- Remove any loose-fitting clothing so no part of your body or your clothing touches the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
- With the door open, prepare to jump by tucking your elbows into your stomach and keeping your hands clasped close to your chest.
- Jump out and make sure you land with your feet together without touching the vehicle. Don't try to jump far.
- Move away from the vehicle, using the shuffle technique. Ensure your feet do not lift off the ground and are always touching each other. The inside of your heel should still be touching the toe of the other foot when you start to move the other leg forward. Continue until you are at least 33 feet away from the vehicle and line.