

Caution with irrigation:

In the summer heat and dry season, farm irrigation can be vital for profitability. It is equally vital that operators know and follow proper safety precautions to avoid potentially deadly electrical accidents when operating and handling watering systems. Follow these suggestions for safe operation of irrigation equipment:

- Make sure that irrigation system wiring is properly grounded. Have a qualified electrician check the pump and wiring.
- Position irrigation pipes and direct water jet streams so there is no chance of them spraying onto power lines. If this happens, the entire system could become energized, creating a danger for anyone nearby.
- Always shut off and lock the master electrical control before servicing the equipment.
- Avoid moving irrigation equipment on windy days when pipes could be blown into nearby power lines. Keep pipes horizontal to the ground rather than vertical to minimize the risk of contact with power lines.

Remember—if an irrigation pipe comes in contact with a power line, call your electric cooperative for help. Never try to remove it yourself.



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Barron Electric Cooperative
Bayfield Electric Cooperative
Chippewa Electric Cooperative
Clark Electric Cooperative
Dunn Energy Cooperative
Eau Claire Energy Cooperative
Freeborn-Mower Cooperative Services
Hawkeye REC
Heartland Power Cooperative
Jackson Electric Cooperative
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Jump River Electric Cooperative

Oakdale Electric Cooperative
People's Energy Cooperative
Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services
Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative
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Ag Safety Around Electricity



During planting and harvest seasons, the days can get long and hectic.

We've put together some reminders to keep you safe around the farm this season.

Spring planting safety

As farmers return to their fields for planting, you know that it is not only hard work, but it can be dangerous also. Each year farmers are electrocuted when large farm machinery makes contact with overhead power lines.

Often the situation occurs because a newer, bigger piece of equipment no longer clears a line the way a smaller one did. Shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year. The following tips will help keep everyone on the farm safer:



- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles.
- Make sure everyone knows to maintain a minimum 10 foot clearance from power lines. This is a 360 degree rule including below, to the sides and above lines. A spotter or someone with a broader view can help.
- Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators or raising truck beds near power lines; never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Remember that equipment loaded on trailers can also hit power lines and can cause electrocutions, as can raising the bed of a truck to unload.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush, as they make it difficult to see power lines.
- Train all farm workers to keep an eye out for overhead power lines. Make sure everyone knows what to do if accidental contact is made with power lines. These accidents are survivable if the right actions are taken.

Fall harvesting safety

Harvest time is the most satisfying time of the year on the farm, as it's the culmination of many long hours of effort in raising a crop. Long hours in the field can make farmers weary and prone to forget safety precautions that can prevent serious or fatal electrical injuries. Don't let this harvest turn dangerous when electrical hazards are overlooked.

- The most common equipment involved in power line accidents are portable grain augers, oversized wagons, large combines and other tall equipment that comes in contact with overhead lines.
- Make sure you have ample clearance when moving large machinery such as combines, augers, pickers, balers and front end loaders. Do this every year as equipment sizes or soil conditions may change.
- Inspect farm equipment for transport height and determine clearance with any power lines under which the equipment must pass.
- Coming too close to a power line while working is dangerous, as electricity can arc or "jump" to conducting materials or objects such as a ladder, pole or truck. Even non-metallic materials like lumber, tires, ropes and hay can conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- Portable augers being maneuvered by hand around bin sites have caused the death of many farm workers who became the path to ground for electricity when the top of the auger touched overhead power lines. Always retract or lower augers when moving or transporting.



Check your clearance height

Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways. If planning a new out building or farm structure, contact your power supplier



for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines. Your local electric cooperative can come out to measure line height—

remember, no one should attempt this on their own without professional assistance.

What to do if contact is made with power lines

It's almost always best to stay in the cab, call for help and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure the power to the line is cut off. If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result.



Even if a power line is on the ground, there is still potential for the area nearby to become energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there is fire or imminent risk of fire.

In case of fire, the proper action is to JUMP—not step—with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Jump clear, without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Then continue to shuffle or hop to safety keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Be sure that at no time you or anyone touches the equipment and the ground at the same time. Never should the operator simply step out of the vehicle. The person must JUMP clear.

For more electrical safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org