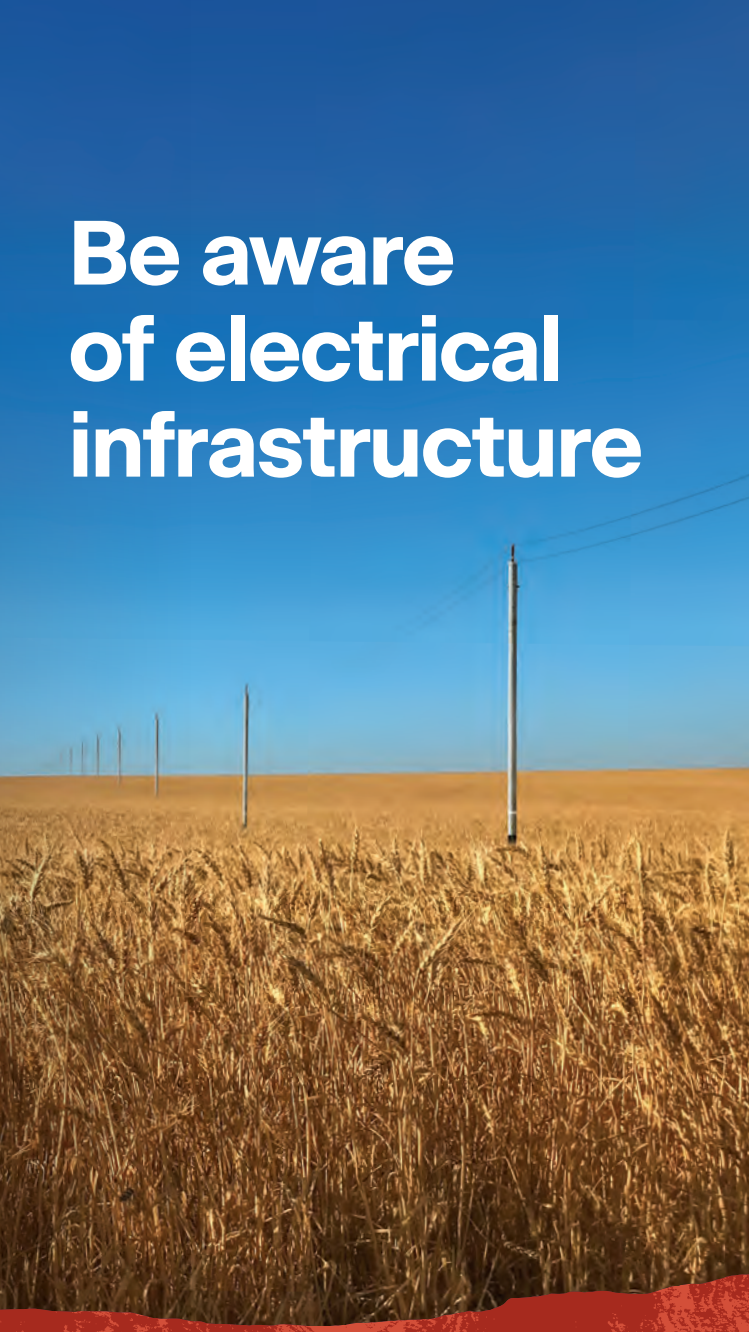
Be aware of electrical infrastructure



HORIZON POWER

Weather? Check ✓
Fuel? Check ✓
Poles & Wires? Check again.

It's hard to imagine life without electricity. Having had electricity available at the flick of a switch for more than a hundred years, it is no surprise that many people forget just how dangerous it can be.

The risks can be even greater on farms where physical damage to electrical systems can be caused by livestock, equipment and people.

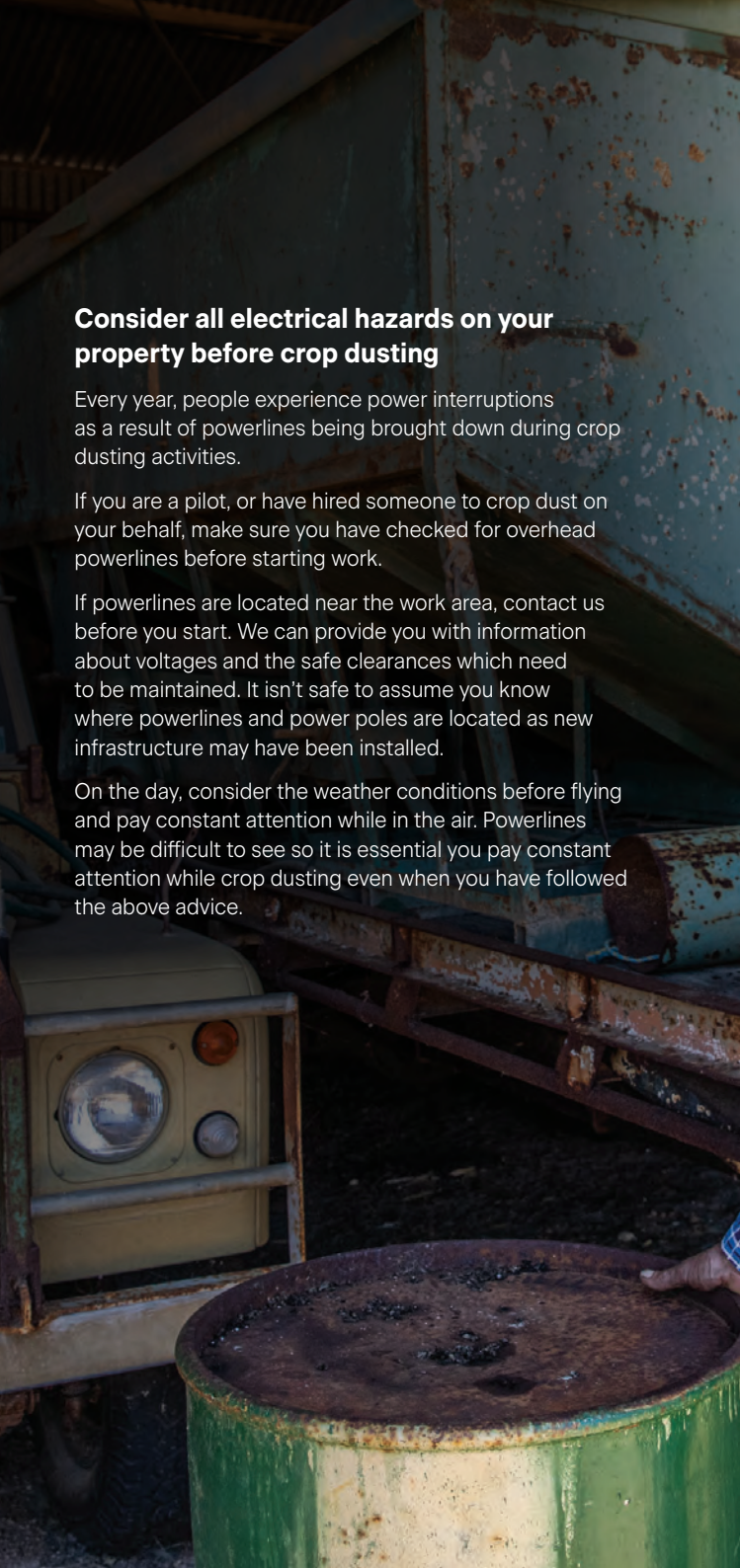
There are many things to be aware of when working near electricity. By working together we can ensure safe and reliable power supplies for you, your family, employees and the community.

Be aware of electrical infrastructure you can see around you

Do some basic checks before starting work

Powerlines, power poles and other electrical infrastructure can all present serious safety risks. Before starting work:

- Look around and identify where power poles and powerlines are located and mark them at ground level;
- If powerlines are located near the work area, contact Horizon Power. Our contact details are listed at the end of this brochure. We can provide you with information about voltages and the safe clearances which need to be maintained before you start;
- Ensure you and your workers are suitably trained to carry out the work required;
- Be aware that the distance of powerlines from the ground may appear to be higher or lower depending on the angle from which they are viewed;
- Don't ever take risks. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us for advice. If necessary, we can disconnect the power supply to enable you to safely carry out the work required; and
- In the event of an incident in which your vehicle comes into contact with power infrastructure, do not exit the vehicle and call us on **13 23 51**.



Consider all electrical hazards on your property before crop dusting

Every year, people experience power interruptions as a result of powerlines being brought down during crop dusting activities.

If you are a pilot, or have hired someone to crop dust on your behalf, make sure you have checked for overhead powerlines before starting work.

If powerlines are located near the work area, contact us before you start. We can provide you with information about voltages and the safe clearances which need to be maintained. It isn't safe to assume you know where powerlines and power poles are located as new infrastructure may have been installed.

On the day, consider the weather conditions before flying and pay constant attention while in the air. Powerlines may be difficult to see so it is essential you pay constant attention while crop dusting even when you have followed the above advice.

Plan ahead and always monitor when stubble burning

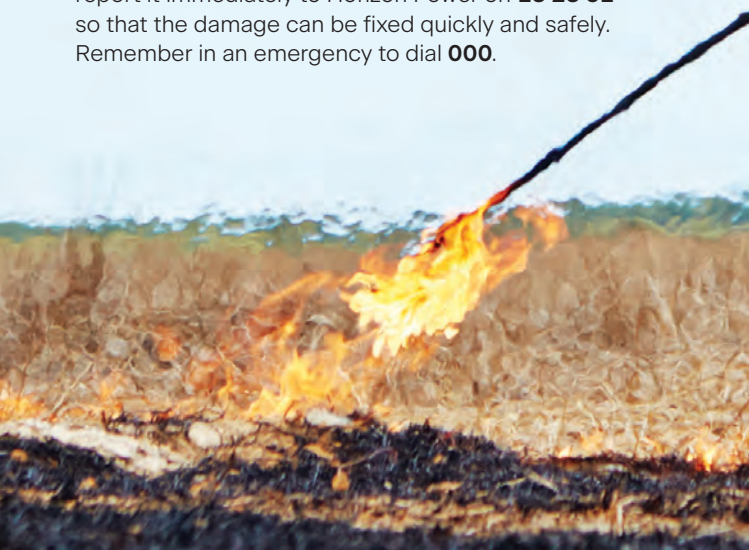
Stubble burning can cause widespread damage and power interruptions when allowed to burn out of control. That's why it requires careful planning and constant monitoring. There have been several incidents caused by stubble burning across regional WA in recent years.

In order to avoid the cost and inconvenience of repairs to damaged electricity infrastructure, we recommend that farmers:

- Check for overhead powerlines before work starts;
- Clear vegetation from around the base of power poles to at least 1.5 metres;
- Wet timber pole bases thoroughly before and after stubble burning;
- Do not rake wind-rows beneath or next to powerlines or poles;
- Have mobile fire units that are easily accessible should a stubble fire get out of control;
- Regularly monitor stubble fires; and
- Do not burn stubble when weather conditions are not suitable (check fire warnings).

We ask farmers to remain vigilant and to check power poles before, during and after stubble burning.

If, despite taking all precautions, you find there is damage to power poles or other electricity infrastructure, report it immediately to Horizon Power on **13 23 51** so that the damage can be fixed quickly and safely. Remember in an emergency to dial **000**.



Be aware of the height and width of your equipment and the loads you transport

Pay special attention to electricity infrastructure when driving oversize vehicles, including farming equipment, and when towing livestock vehicles. You should know the height and width of machinery in both stowed and working conditions and should always lower machinery whenever possible.

To ensure your safety and that of your community, you'll need approval from Horizon Power before you can transport oversized loads. This applies to loads higher than 4.3 metres (or 4.6 metres for livestock vehicles when travelling on nominated routes) or wider than 5.5 metres.

Depending on the route and the size of the load, Horizon Power may need to help you by moving, raising or shielding powerlines or by providing a road escort.

You can apply for a permit by visiting our website at **www.horizonpower.com.au**. A fee is payable to process your application and additional costs may apply for an escort, observer or for powerlines to be raised.

Be aware of the things you can do to help us keep your power on and keep you safe

Stay in your vehicle if it is in contact with power infrastructure

If you attempt to exit the vehicle, there is a risk of electric shock or electrocution. The safest thing you can do is stay in the vehicle, call Horizon Power on **13 23 51** and wait for us to assist you. We will attend as a priority.

If you see crops on powerlines, please report it

Dry swathed crops, such as canola, can blow onto overhead powerlines and cause power interruptions.

Sometimes the crop can clear itself off the lines, but if not, qualified crews are required to physically remove crops and debris before restoring power supply.

If you see crops on powerlines please report it to Horizon Power on **13 23 51**.

Ensure electrical infrastructure can be accessed by trained personnel

In order to ensure the safety and reliability of your power supply, Horizon Power authorised personnel must have clear access to all electrical infrastructure, such as transfomers and power poles, on both public and private property.

Please make sure that access isn't restricted by activities such as crop-netting.

If you're aware of any access issues, such as boggy tracks, please let us know and we will endeavour to work with you.

If we do access your property, we commit to limiting movement as much as possible and ensuring that gates are left open or closed as they were found.

Are your trees too close to powerlines?

Trees or branches touching powerlines is one of the main causes of power interruptions and can cause fires or other serious accidents.

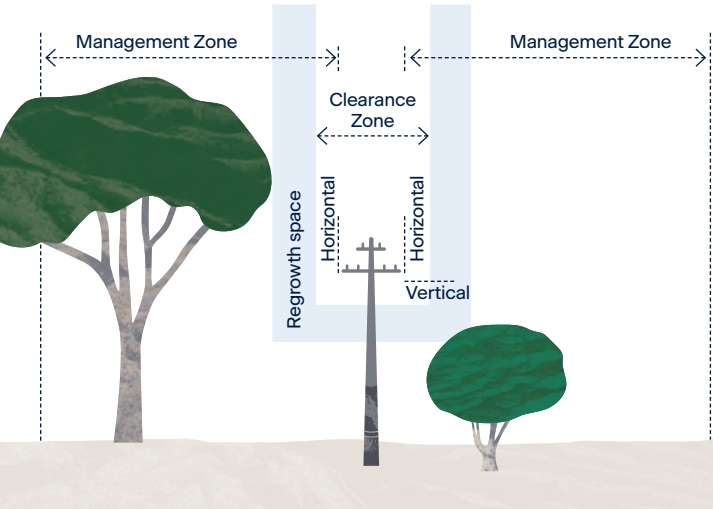
We encourage the planting of the right tree in the right place. Unfortunately, many trees are planted, or have naturally grown, too close to powerlines and need to be trimmed.

Trees must always be trimmed if they are too close to powerlines. In the north of Western Australia, trees should be trimmed before the summer cyclone season, between November and April. Trees in the Mid West and southern parts of the state should be trimmed before winter.

Horizon Power regularly conducts inspections of powerlines to identify where vegetation is growing too close. The diagram below shows the minimum clearance zones. As a general rule, trees should be no closer than five metres to powerlines or 10 meters in cyclone prone areas. For the minimal clearance figure for your region please contact your local Horizon Power office.

If the trees at your property need to be trimmed, hire a professional tree contractor as they have the correct training and experience to carry out the work.

To find a professional tree trimming contractor, we recommend visiting **www.treeguildwa.asn.au**. Please ensure you check that contractors have current qualifications and insurances.



Private power poles and powerlines are your responsibility

Powerlines delivering electricity from your main switchboard and meter to your home or other buildings are private powerlines. This includes the pole where Horizon Power's overhead service cable is attached and/or the pole where switchboard/meter box is located.

If you have private powerlines or poles on your property, it is your responsibility to inspect and maintain them. Keep trees and branches clear of powerlines. This will help prevent power interruptions and reduce the possibility of fire, electric shock or electrocution.

If you're unsure about whether you are responsible for the powerlines or poles on your property, please contact your local Horizon Power office.

It is important that you inspect your private powerlines and poles (including stay-wires, fittings and all other components) at least once a year for any visible signs of deterioration. Never climb a pole, approach the wires, attempt any electrical repairs yourself or cut any vegetation near an energised powerline. Contact with live wires can kill.

We recommend that you:

- Safely remove any vegetation on the ground close to the base of all power poles and under the powerlines;
- Check trees and branches are at least five metres away from powerlines. If they are not, arrange for tree pruning by a competent vegetation control contractor. You can contact the Tree Guild of WA for a list of trained contractors;
- Check wood poles for obvious defects such as cracks, rot or attack by white-ants/termites; and
- Inspect steel poles regularly. Steel poles, even if galvanised, can rust and should be checked above and below ground for defects.

For more information visit the *Energy Safety* website at **www.commerce.wa.gov.au/energysafety** and search for private power poles.

Always use a licensed electrical contractor

When renovating or doing maintenance on your property, do not risk causing harm to yourself, your family or your employees by doing your own electrical work. Use a licensed contractor.

Licensed electrical contractors have been expertly trained to work safely around electricity and will guarantee the quality of their work.

Electrical contractors must display their licence number on their advertising, including vehicles and stationery, so remember to check these before an electrical contractor starts work at your property. You can check whether an electrical contractor has the necessary qualifications by visiting the *Energy Safety* website at **www.commerce.wa.gov.au/energysafety** and following the link to the Licensing Information System.

Using generators

Many people own portable generators to provide back-up power or to power remote buildings or appliances on their properties.

When buying a generator, we recommend you choose one that provides more power than you need to supply your essential appliances. If your appliances draw more power than your generator produces, both the generator and appliances may be damaged.

Other important tips are:

- Do not connect a generator to the electrical wiring of your home unless a licensed electrical contractor has installed an isolating switch. Power from a generator connected to a home's wiring will 'back feed' into powerlines, potentially severely injuring or killing a neighbour or a repair crew working on these lines trying to restore power;
- Only operate petrol and diesel generators outdoors and well away from open windows as they produce harmful fumes. Use a heavy duty extension cord rated for outdoor use to keep the generator safely outdoors;
- Do not trust your senses for protection from carbon monoxide; this deadly gas is invisible and odourless. When you buy a generator also buy a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm;
- Make sure you read the manufacturer's instructions for use of the generator;
- Keep the generator on a dry surface. Do not allow it to get wet or use it in wet conditions;
- Do not operate the generator with wet hands; and
- Make sure the generator is switched off and has cooled down before refuelling as it can ignite if fuel is spilled on hot engine parts.

Be aware that electrical infrastructure may be underground

Before you dig know what's below

Electricity and other essential services are often provided through underground networks.

No matter the size of your project, whether it be landscaping your backyard or heavy work such as directional boring or directional drilling, you should be aware of this infrastructure and the risks posed.

Before You Dig is a free national community service aimed at preventing danger, damage and disruption to Australia's complex pipe and cable networks.

You can find out if there is underground infrastructure where you want to work by submitting an application to Before You Dig, either online at **byda.com.au** or by phoning **1100**.

We will provide you with plans showing the location of any underground infrastructure on receipt of your application to Before You Dig. Make sure you study the plans you are provided with carefully before you start work.

Unfortunately, not all underground infrastructure owners participate in Before You Dig so it remains important to take care when excavating and always follow the 'Five Ps' of excavation:

Plan – Plan your job. Use the Before You Dig service at least two business days before your job is due to begin to ensure you have the correct information you need to carry out a safe project.

Prepare – Prepare by reviewing the utility plans and contacting the asset owners if you need assistance. Look for on-site asset clues such as pit lids, electrical green domes, gas or water meters. Engage a Certified Locator who can assist you in locating assets electronically before potholing.

Pothole – Potholing (hand digging) is a method to assist in establishing the exact location of all underground infrastructure.

Protect – Protecting and supporting the exposed infrastructure is the responsibility of the excavator. Always erect safety barriers in areas at risk to protect underground networks.

Proceed – Only when you have planned, potholed and put the protective measures in place.

In an emergency

If you hit electrical infrastructure, stay at least 10m away and for your safety call on us **13 23 51.**

In emergency situations, dial **000.**

Horizon Power

Emergency or supply interruptions	13 23 51
Faulty streetlights and poles	1800 264 914
Residential enquiries	1800 267 926
Interpreter service:	13 14 50
TTY	133 677

Other useful numbers

Police, Ambulance, Fire	000
State Emergency Service	13 25 00
WaterCorp (faults and emergencies)	13 13 75
Telstra (faults and service difficulties)	13 22 03

Regional offices

Broome
Shop 25 & 26 Paspaley Plaza
8 Short Street
BROOME WA 6725
Ph: (08) 9192 9900

Esperance
143 Sims Street
ESPERANCE WA 6450
Ph: (08) 9072 3400

Gascoyne & Mid West
Cnr Iles Rd & Robinson St
CARNARVON WA 6701
Ph: (08) 9941 6299

Karratha
Stovehill Road
KARRATHA WA 6714
Ph: (08) 9159 7250

Kununurra
Lot 228 Messmate Way
KUNUNURRA WA 6743
Ph: (08) 9166 4700

Port Hedland
18 Anderson Street
PORT HEDLAND WA 6721
Ph: (08) 9173 8281

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