

## A Safety Note from Your Cooperative



No. 08-2018

# Safety Up for Fall Season!

Prepared by Minnesota Rural Electric Association for our cooperative;  
Author, Lidia Dilley Jacobson

It's a golden time of year (and not because the children will be going back to school soon) for we see the hard work of our farming community as the crops will soon be harvested. On a recent trip to South Dakota, they were already harvesting the small grains.

Yet, too often, harvest season for the cooperative and our members can spell trouble. Our lineworkers and other employees respond to many pole hits or snagged lines that can not only cause outages but can be deadly, too. Overhead lines end up on the ground and they can still be energized. Our employees then have to repair the line, and not often in the best of conditions.

So, let's make the goal to work through this harvest season with NO damage to our services that bring you power every day. But, we need your help. Here's what you can do.

### **Look around your yard. Note where your overhead power lines are located.**

1. Will you be moving equipment near these lines?
2. Could you pick a different route so you can stay clear of the lines to enter and exit your yard?
3. If you cannot, and have to lower equipment, can you get a reminder posted someplace?  
(Note – do not put anything on the line). Could you use a spotter all the time?

### **Look around the field you are working. Note where the overhead lines enter, exit and/or surround your field.**

1. How close are you to the poles when using the equipment in the field?
2. Will you be moving irrigation systems around this fall that could get into the overhead lines?
3. Do you have anyone helping you harvest this fall? Have you discussed watching for overhead lines? Do you use a spotter here, too?
4. Have you figured out the best routes in and out of your fields to avoid overhead lines?
5. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year-to-year. Has the soil shifted in any key spots?
6. Are any of the power lines sagging? Report this condition right away.

### **Look at your equipment.**

1. Are there any antennas or other attachments that could contact a power line or hit a pole when turning?
2. As our equipment gets bigger, can it still clear the powerline? You should stay at least 20 feet away and that is on ALL sides, up and down of the equipment.
3. Do you have equipment that folds up or down? Before deploying or activating this feature, make sure you are clear of the power line and poles.

If you do become entangled in the equipment, stay put in the vehicle or machinery unless a fire starts and you need to exit VERY CAREFULLY. The equipment and the ground could be energized. Call 911 and have them call the cooperative. To learn more about exiting the equipment when an energized line is contacting it, check out this link below.

<https://www.poweringyoursafety.com/>

