

## Practice Work Zone Safety

Work zone safety is not limited to professions that use construction signs, flashing lights, and orange traffic cones. Everyone, regardless of their job has a work zone. And each work zone contains potential safety hazards that could result in serious injury to you and your co-workers. Practice work zone safety by following these rules:

1. Define your work zone. If you're working in an area, it becomes your work zone.
2. Anticipate potential hazards. Changes in procedures can mean new hazards.
3. Remove, repair, or report any safety hazards.
4. Protect your safety within your work zone. Wear appropriate PPE and follow all safety rules.
5. Make others aware of your work zone. Using lockout/tagout is one example of how you can warn others of a safety hazard - while protecting yourself.
6. Keep the safety of others in mind. Keep a protective eye on anyone who enters your work zone.
7. Communicate when you share a work zone. Make sure everyone is aware of hazards and appropriate protective measures.
8. Secure your work zone before you leave it. Follow all required housekeeping and safety procedures.

1996 Bureau of Business Practice

## Working Safely Near Overhead Power Lines

Workers risk electrocution when using metal ladders around energized, overhead power lines. From 1992 through 2005, there have been at least 154 electrocution deaths that resulted from contacting overhead power lines with portable metal ladders (not counting truck-mounted and aerial ladders). Ladder contacts with power lines usually occurred during erection, lowering, or relocation of the ladder.

OSHA standards include a number of work rules to help eliminate these types of deaths:

For workers in the construction industry,

Requirements for worker training

Safe use of ladders

Working near an electric circuit

Providing prompt medical attention in the event of serious injury

For workers in other industries

Minimum distances between workers using conductive equipment and power lines

Both sets of regulations provide good guidance for protecting workers from contact with overhead power lines, regardless of whether the regulations are required by the industry employing the workers. The following safety rules incorporate OSHA requirements and best practices recommended by the National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health.

### Site Setup

Identify the location of overhead power lines as a routine part of all initial worksite surveys for jobs involving the use of ladders. Always note power line heights and distances from work areas on site diagrams to provide key information for site workers.

Avoid or limit proximity to power lines whenever possible. Consider ladder length and room for ladder staging (safely raising & lowering ladders).

Notify the local electric utility company for assistance if work needs to be done near energized, overhead power lines.

Ensure that workers maintain a safe working distance between power lines and equipment or structures that require periodic maintenance or access.

Do not store materials or equipment below or near overhead power lines.

Eliminate the use of metal ladders near energized overhead power lines

Ensure that workers keep conductive objects at least 10 feet away from unguarded, energized lines up to 50 kilovolts. For every 10 kilovolts above 50 kilovolts, maintain an additional four inches of clearance.



Working Safely Near  
Overhead Power Lines cont.

## Worksite Safety Rules

As part of the site safety program and orientation, make workers aware of power line distances from work areas, including ladder length and ladder staging areas. Use site diagrams to communicate this information and ground level signs or taped markers to remind workers of overhead power line locations.

For training, consider the languages and reading levels of the workers. Explain the risks and consequences of contacting overhead power lines. Explain and provide hands-on practice in recognizing hazards and avoiding unsafe conditions with ladders and overhead power lines.

Consider affixing bilingual labels with graphics to provide hazard warnings and instructions for the safe use of ladders to workers whose primary language is not English.

Do not use metal ladders near energized overhead power lines. Provide the appropriate American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved ladder for work near energized, overhead power lines.

Prevent movement into a power line by ensuring that ladders are stable, level, and adequately supported (i.e. tied or blocked).

Ensure that workers are provided with a means of emergency communication and are also trained in approaching injured workers and providing aid during an electrical incident, including first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Working Safely Near  
Overhead Power Lines cont.

## Worker Safety Rules

Look up! Note the location of overhead power lines at the start of each job.

Always assume all overhead lines are energized and dangerous.

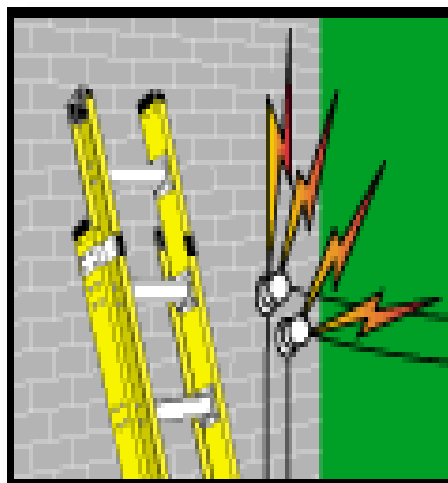
Do not use metal ladder when working around or near overhead power lines.

Always lower the ladder and carry it horizontally when moving it to avoid contacting overhead power lines. Have someone help carry and set up long and unwieldy ladders.

Follow the 1:4 rule: for every four feet between the ground and the upper point where the ladder is resting, set the feet of the ladder out one foot horizontally. For example, if the ladder is resting on the edge of a roof 16 feet above the ground, the bottom of the ladder should be four feet out from that edge.

Never touch or go near a person or equipment (such as a ladder) that is in contact with an overhead power line.

### Follow all safety rules.



## EASE INTO ZZZs



Do you have trouble sleeping? There are a number of factors from household responsibilities to job stress that can make sleep elusive. Help put your sleep problems to bed with these tips.

**Stick to a schedule.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends.

**Exercise regularly.** But avoid exercising late in the day.

**Wind down with a sleep welcoming nighttime routine.** Take a warm shower, listen to soft music or read a book before bed each night. Don't watch TV or finish your latest sales report while in bed. Reserve the bedroom for sleep and sex.

**Set the stage.** Make your bedroom a soothing sleep zone with comfortable bedding and dark curtains. Keep the temperature cool, and use eye covers, earplugs or a fan or other white noise generators to help block distractions.

**Avoid nicotine and caffeine.** These are stimulants that may keep you awake.

**Don't take long daytime naps.** Daily afternoon naps steal hours from nighttime sleep. If you do nap, doze for less than an hour no later than 3 pm.

**Don't go to bed hungry or with an overly full stomach.**

**Drink a small amount of milk before bed.** Milk contains the amino acid tryptophan, which can help you feel sleepy.

**Avoid medications that may disrupt sleep.** If you're bothered by a prescription medication, ask your doctor if you can take it at a different time of day or switch to another medication that won't interfere with your sleep.

**If you still can't sleep after a week or two of restless nights, see your doctor. You may have a sleep disorder.**

We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (269) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, MI 49083. Also visit our website at: [www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com](http://www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com)