

Outdoor Electrical Safety

In a recent conversation, Operations Superintendent Rob Rising mentioned an article that states June and July are the months when most electrical accidents happen. That is not surprising, given nice that weather lures people outside, and summer construction and home improvement projects get underway. These activities lead to potential interaction with power lines, both overhead and underground.

This past school year, our staff visited with four public schools in Klickitat County to talk to young folks about power line safety. I want to remind you to think about electrical safety when planning your projects.

A tall piece of machinery, a television antenna, a metal ladder, an irrigation pipe, a wooden pole or a human body part that touches both the wire and ground will complete the circuit and conduct electricity. It is crucial that you look before you lift, and call before you dig.

Never go near a downed line, whether you think it is energized or not. Never place a ladder or antenna where it can fall into a power line. Carry equipment low enough to avoid coming near power lines. Never attach anything to a power pole.

To prevent yourself or a loved one from becoming a victim of an electrical accident, follow these other electrical safety tips:

- Before digging, call 811. Someone will mark underground utilities to make sure you don't come in contact with power lines, gas lines or any other utilities. One wrong move can result in death or injury from electric shock or an explosion.
- Don't plant tall-growing trees under power lines. If a tree has lines running through it, don't climb it or build anything in it.
- Stay away from downed power lines. If someone comes in contact with a power line, call Klickitat PUD immediately so the power can be turned off.
- Never fly kites, toy airplanes or metallic balloons near power lines or in stormy weather. Avoid using metal or wire on kites. If your kite, balloon or aerial toy gets snagged on overhead lines, don't try to untangle it. Call the PUD at (800) 548-8357.

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