

Power and Water's top dozen electrical safety tips

1 Three simple rules for fallen powerlines

- 1 Stand well clear, do **not** touch the wires.
- 2 Stand guard to prevent other people from going near the wires.
- 3 Send someone to call Power and Water on **Emergency 1800 245 090** or the Police, If you are alone wait for someone to pass and ask them to assist.

2 Stay clear of powerlines

- Look up when **planning work** near powerlines.
- Do not fly model **planes or kites** near powerlines.
- Do not cast fishing lines or moor boats near **submerged powerlines**.
- Booms and poles **can hit overhead powerlines** and conduct electricity.

3 Liquids and electricity don't mix

If liquid spills onto an appliance, switch it off immediately and have it checked before using it again. Be especially careful with hair dryers and electric shavers in the bathroom. Never throw water on an electrical fire.

4 Care for your cords

Unplug your appliance if:

- the cord is frayed,
- a storm is approaching, or
- smoke or odd smells are coming from an appliance.

Always pull out by the plug, not by the cord. Fix all broken plugs and frayed cords – they are dangerous. Never run an extension cord for garden equipment or power tools near or through the pool. Do not use PVC or insulation tape to repair cords – have the cord replaced instead.

5 One power point, one plug

A stack of plugs on double adaptors is always a **bad idea**. A surge-protected power board, with each cable labeled, is a **far better idea**. Having another power point installed by an electrician is **cheaper than a fire**.

6 Think of the children

Ensure that plugs and cords are **not hanging where children can pull them out** – supervise children in the room if necessary. Safety plugs in unused power points have saved lives. Ensure there are **no electrical wires** near places where children play (think kites, swings and model planes).

7 Know your switchboard

Know where the switchboard for your premises is – and **know how to turn the power supply off** in case of an emergency. Check that each switch, circuit breaker and fuse is **correctly labeled**. Call an electrical contractor if there is any confusion. Use only the correct size fuse wire to re-wire fuses.

8 Read instructions on all electrical equipment

Whether it's electronic entertainment equipment, household appliances or electric tools in the workshop, **read all instructions before you start**.

9 Switch off when you leave

Turn off heaters, airconditioners, appliances and computers before you leave your home or workplace. It **can avoid fires** (and will save on your power bill too).

10 Install safety switches

If you work with power tools consider installing a safety switch designed to protect people from the **most frequent cause of electrocution** – electric current 'earthing' through the body. Safety switches usually cut out within 1/37th of a second, which is fast enough to **prevent electrocution** in most cases. An Electrical Contractor can help you.

11 Bring in a professional

Use a licensed tradesman for all electrical, plumbing and other maintenance work. If you are working near powerlines, call Power and Water first. Painting trestles, aluminum ladders and metal scaffolding can all be **electrical hazards**. Non-conducting equipment is available – speak to industrial suppliers or hardware stores.

12 Keep clear of our infrastructure

Our pumping stations, electricity substations and transmission lines, water towers and other locations are always signposted and carry warning notices. Only authorised people can enter these premises, using the **correct protective equipment**.