



SafeWork NSW  
Department of Customer Service

# Electrical Safety in Construction

Stakeholder Pack January 2023

Shortcuts cut life short



# OVERVIEW

As part of a state-wide safety program, SafeWork NSW will undertake site inspections and raise awareness on *Electrical Safety in Construction* from February 2023.

## Can you help us get the message out there?

This pack contains an adaptable newsletter and social media ads to help you communicate with your members and wider networks.

- ✓ Use the resources and case studies in toolbox talks to educate your members
- ✓ Publish the prepared newsletter article in your communications channels
- ✓ Circulate to your members
- ✓ Add to your social media
- ✓ Share our social media

For more information, email us at Construction Interventions [Interventions@safework.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Interventions@safework.nsw.gov.au)

# OUR FOCUS – REDUCING HAZARDS AND HARMS

SafeWork NSW is working to improve safety practices and address the rising rate of incidents and fatalities when working with electricity on construction sites

SafeWork NSW Inspectors will:

Complete site inspections from Feb – June 2023

Zero tolerance on-the-spot fines of up to \$3600

More information is available on the website <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/electrical-and-power>



# ADDITIONAL PENALTY NOTICES



Existing	Additional	Penalties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12 existing penalty offences relating to General electrical safety in workplaces</li><li>• individuals up to \$1200 and corporations up to \$3600</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>5 additional</u> penalties introduced October 2022</li><li>• individuals up to \$720 and corporations up to \$3600</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not disconnecting electrical equipment</li><li>• Not preventing from being re-energised</li><li>• Failing to use RCD</li><li>• Not conducting a risk assessment</li><li>• Not following overhead/underground power line controls</li></ul>

Additional penalties introduced into the WHS legislation in October 22

# INCIDENT RELEASE – CASE STUDY

## Overhead Powerlines Electric Shock



A 36-year-old worker was installing a steel reinforcement bar into a wall cavity on a construction site.

SafeWork NSW, NSW Police Force and other Emergency Services responded to the incident.

While attempting to position the reinforcement bar to insert into the cavity, it extended past the edge of the scaffold and touched high voltage powerlines.

The worker received serious injuries.

1. Hoarding needs to be in place
2. Use Look up and Live app – make sure you are carrying out the work safely when working with overhead power lines
3. Consult with the supply authority

# INCIDENT RELEASE – CASE STUDY



## Electrocution

A 35-year-old electrician was fatally injured when he handled energised wires whilst completing works on an electrical circuit beneath a house.

Electric shock is the second leading cause of death in the construction industry.

It is important to ensure

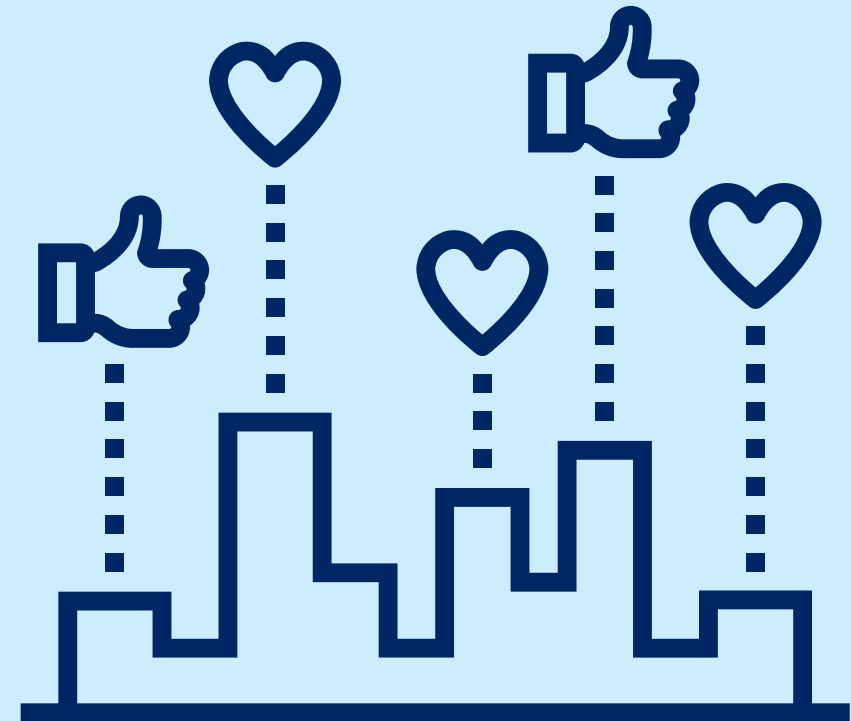
electrical work is either conducted or appropriately supervised by a licensed electrician.

1. Isolate the installation at the main switch
2. Test to ensure de-energisation
3. Check for other hazards

# CONTENT FOR YOU TO SHARE

Use the content on the following slides to **promote and raise awareness** within your networks.

Please remember to refer to **SafeWork NSW** in your content on social media.



# SOCIAL MEDIA

Working with electricity can be fatal. Don't switch off early. Check for hazards, isolate and test. Use the SafeWork NSW Electrical Safety Checklist and other resources to help you keep your workers safe. Head to the SafeWork NSW website to find out more.  
<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/electrical-and-power>

Electricity is a major cause of serious injuries and fatalities on construction sites. Check for hazards, isolate and test. Shortcuts cut life short. SafeWork inspectors will be conducting compliance workplace visits.

New penalties apply. Visit the SafeWork NSW website for more information <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/electrical-and-power>

You can also share the social media posts which will be published on SafeWork NSW's social media channels throughout the year.  
Here are the links:

[SafeWork NSW's Facebook page](#)  
[SafeWork NSW's LinkedIn page](#)  
[SafeWork NSW's Twitter account](#)





# NEWSLETTER CONTENT



## Electrical Safety in Construction - Don't switch off early

Electricity can kill or severely injure people and cause property damage. Since 2020 there has been 1024 incidents, 584 injuries and three fatalities. Almost any job around energised equipment could end in tragedy. Protect your workers, don't take shortcuts and never assume an electrical system is safe.

### Take these simple measures to keep your workers safe:

- ❖ Manage the risks associated with any electrical work, electrical equipment or electrical installation. Firstly, talk with your workers about any potential electrical hazards in your workplace. Download this [webinar](#)
- ❖ Disconnect any unsafe electrical equipment. If you find damaged equipment, fix it or get rid of it.
- ❖ Get a 'competent person' to inspect and test your electrical equipment using proper testing equipment. Once tested, keep a record of, or tag the equipment with information.
- ❖ Train and supervise young workers. Do not leave them on site alone this is when accidents happen.
- ❖ Most of the time, no-one is allowed to work on energised equipment. Before touching it, test every circuit and every conductor – and never assume equipment is de-energised. Make sure a competent person tests the electrical equipment to find out whether it is energised before you carry out any work.
- ❖ Don't allow access to areas where energised equipment is being worked on.
- ❖ Use [residual current devices \(RCDs\)](#) or safety switches.
- ❖ Don't work too close to overhead or underground powerlines. If that's not practical, do a risk assessment and follow the advice of the electricity supply authority.
- ❖ Comply with [AS/NZS 3012: 2010 Electrical installation – construction and demolition sites](#) if you're doing electrical work on a construction site. and use the [Electrical Safety in Construction Inspection Checklist](#)

supervisors and workers about safe temporary power installations, overhead and underground services, and electrical testing of power tools, leads, and other site equipment and ensuring all workers are adequately supervised.


SafeWork NSW will take a zero-tolerance approach towards placing workers lives at risk by not adequately protecting them from electrical hazards and harms at the workplace. On-the-spot fines will be issued of up to \$3,600 for businesses and \$1,200 for individuals

For information about risk management, specific electrical hazards, working de-energised, working near energised electrical parts, tools and equipment, and high-voltage electrical work, see the [code of practice for managing electrical risks in the workplace](#) or head to the [SafeWork NSW website](#).

From February 2023, SafeWork NSW Inspectors will be talking with PCBU's, principal contractors, site

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN CONSTRUCTION CHECKLIST



SafeWork NSW 

## Electrical Safety in Construction Inspection Checklist

This checklist is designed to be used by PCBU's, principal contractors or site supervisors to conduct a basic inspection to identify common electrical deficiencies and hazards.

PCBU's/Principal Contractors/site supervisors have a duty to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes the provision of safe systems of work and plant that is adequately maintained. On-the-spot fines of up to \$3,600 for businesses and \$720 for individuals may be issued to those placing workers lives at risk by not adequately protecting them from electrical risks at the workplace.

The following guidance can help you prepare and plan for safe, effective and compliant electrical equipment and electrical installations on site.

### Administration

Name:	Date:	Time:
Site address:		
Principal contractor / Site Supervisor / Electrician:		

Safely manage electrical work onsite by ensuring:

- only licenced electricians are able to conduct or supervise energised electrical work. You can check a licence is valid by visiting [www.licencecheck.nsw.gov.au](http://www.licencecheck.nsw.gov.au)
- site inductions and ongoing toolbox talks should clearly state that unlicensed electrical work is prohibited (with the exception of an apprentice or labourer under direct supervision of a licenced electrician)
- workers, including contractors, need to be consulted about site rules, including the safety around electricity including overhead and underground powerlines
- work is undertaken in accordance with a site specific Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)
- the project is planned and sequenced to minimise risk to other trades working in the same area

External checklist - Electrical Safety in Construction Inspection Checklist Page 1

Overhead/Underground powerlines

Temporary site power

Temporary lighting

Leads and power tools

Transportable buildings, lift shafts

Inspection, testing, record keeping

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN CONSTRUCTION WEBINAR



Electrical Safety in Construction

This video is a recording of a webinar presented by Inspectors from SafeWork NSW and NSW Fair Trading. It outlines simple measures to work safely with, or near, electricity and electrical equipment in the construction industry.

# RESOURCES

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## [WHS Regs Part 4.7](#)

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1989-147>

[Code of practice for managing electrical risks in the workplace](#)

[AS/NZS 3012 Electrical installation – construction and demolition sites](#)

[Solar panel photovoltaic \(PV\) installations](#)

• [Safe work method statements \(SWMS\)](#)

- [Demolition work \(PDF, 166.25 KB\)](#)
- [High risk construction work template \(PDF, 4004.58 KB\)](#)

• [Supervisor Workshops](#)

• [SafetyCast podcasts](#)

• [Speak Up Save Lives app](#)

• [Small Business Rebate](#)

• [Licences](#)

• [Order a hard copy or download \(PDF, 1759.1 KB\) a pocket-size guide to safety in construction](#)

- [Look Up and Live](#)
- [Master Electrician Australia](#)
- [National Electrical and Communications Association](#)
- [Before You Dig Australia](#)



Scan here

[www.safework.nsw.gov.au](http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au)

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