

# General Trade and Maintenance

## TOP TIPS

- Plan work and contact the electricity network operator in advance of work commencing.
- Ensure your risk assessment includes how electricity is supplied to the property and how you can keep yourself and others safe when working around supply cables and overhead power lines.
- Do not move or tamper with electricity supply cables or any electricity network equipment.
- Always operate power tools with caution.
- Dig by hand with caution where you expect underground electricity cables to be laid and look out for marker tape or tiles.
- To find the local electricity network operator, search 'electricity distribution map' on the ENA website at [www.energynetworks.org](http://www.energynetworks.org).

In an emergency dial **999** and tell them electricity is involved.

Call **105** if you have a safety concern related to the electricity network or if you spot damage to overhead power lines, underground cables and substations that could put you, or someone else, in danger.



**DANGER  
OF DEATH**



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The Voice of the Networks



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Safety advice to third party contractors.



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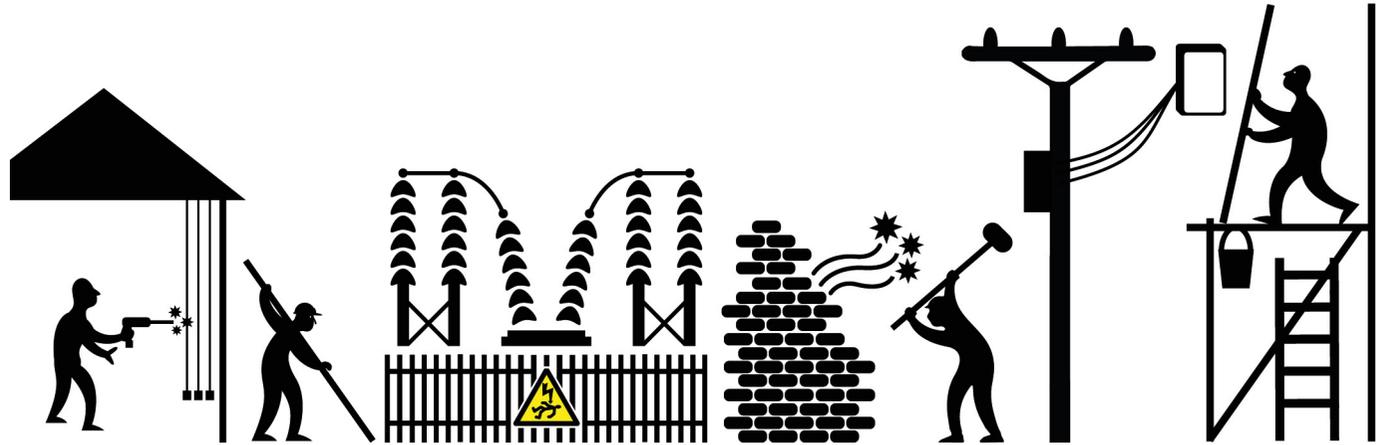
The electricity network is made up of overhead power lines, underground cables, substations and other equipment which transmits and distributes electricity from a power station to your plug. This equipment carries voltages ranging from 230 volts (domestic) up to 400,000 volts (both can be lethal). It is safe in normal conditions, but each year people are injured and even killed when they accidentally come too close to or into contact with it. So it is important you know how to stay safe.

## WHAT TO KNOW

This is advice for anyone who carries out general maintenance work in the vicinity of electricity network apparatus and includes:

- builders and construction workers
- scaffolders
- roofers
- painters
- drilling contractors

Be aware of how electricity is supplied to a property, whether it is by overhead power line or underground cable, and be respectful of electricity apparatus that may be near the property, such as substations and surrounding buildings.



### Key points to remember

Ensure everyone looks for electrical wires, cables or equipment near where they are going to work and check for signs warning of dangers from electricity. Checks must be made around the job, and remember that electrical cables may be buried in walls, floors and ceilings (especially when drilling into these locations).

- Find out where the main fuse box or consumer unit is located and how to switch off the electricity in the event of an emergency.
- Make sure anyone working with electricity has sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to do so. Incorrectly wiring a plug can be dangerous and lead to fatal accidents or fires.
- Contact the local electricity network operator in plenty of time if planning to work near overhead power lines or digging near underground cables. They will offer free safety advice and cable plans.
- Stand back and look at the route that overhead power lines may take from the connection point on the property down to the cut-out near the meter position. It could be hidden in eaves or rendering, so take extra care using power tools such as drills or hammers.
- Underground electric supply cables could be shallow and may not run in a straight line. Contact your local electricity network operator as soon as possible for free advice on working safely.
- Consider using a residual current device (RCD) between the electrical supply and the equipment, especially when working outdoors, or within a wet or confined place (see Health and Safety Executive's (HSE's) *Electrical safety at work site* at [www.hse.gov.uk/electricity](http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity)).

### Overhead power lines

Be aware of the dangers of working near or underneath overhead power lines. Always assume overhead power lines are live and beware that electricity can jump gaps. Do not work under them when equipment (e.g. ladders, crane jibs, tipper-lorry bodies, scaffold poles) could come within a minimum of 5 metres of a power line without seeking advice. Speak to your local electricity network operator, railway company or tram operator, before any work begins.

### Underground cables

Always assume cables will be present when digging in the street, pavement and/or near buildings.

Consult local electricity network operator service plans to identify where cables are located and dig with care.

### Mural wiring

Some older properties in rural areas are supplied by mural wiring, which runs along the outside walls of adjacent properties. Avoid any contact, damage, or disturbance to this wiring.

### Substations

If you have a substation located on your property it will usually be enclosed with a fence, wall or building. Do not allow anyone to enter into the substation. If you notice any signs of damage or vandalism, contact the electricity network operator.