



NEWS RELEASE

As outdoor work begins, Elexicon Energy partners with Electricity Safety Authority, reminding customers to avoid deadly distractions

Powerline Safety Week in Ontario kicks off today

AJAX, ON -- May 11, 2020 – Warmer weather brings with it an abundance of outdoor projects, from pruning trees to clearing the eavestroughs. Outdoor work is rewarding, but it can also be hazardous. May 11 to 17 is Powerline Safety Week, and Elexicon Energy is partnering with the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) in urging residents to avoid deadly distractions by practicing three critical steps: **stop, look and live.**

This year, COVID-19 has forced large swaths of Ontarians to stay home. More people than usual have the flexibility to pursue outdoor improvement projects, but with greater opportunity comes increased risk. It is as important as ever for people to remain vigilant and exercise caution when working near powerlines.

“Staying safe around powerlines is a collective responsibility. Whether you’re doing some landscaping, taking down the Christmas lights, or breaking ground on a new deck, everyone has a part to play,” says Sarah Del Gatto, Manager of Health, Safety & Environment at Elexicon Energy. “A single distraction – no matter how momentary – could cause a life-threatening injury or fatality.”

Overhead powerlines should always be considered hazardous. Residents should exercise an abundance of caution when working in close proximity to powerlines, including by staying three metres away at all times and carrying ladders and other tall tools sideways.

“Even if you don’t come into direct contact with a powerline, you could still receive a shock. Electricity can jump from lines to nearby objects,” warns Dr. Joel Moody, ESA’s Chief Public Safety Officer. “That’s why everyone should stay safe and aware around powerlines, and why we’re reminding people to stop, look and live.”

Stop, Look, Live: Powerline Safety Tips for Households

1. **Locate powerlines.** Before you start any yard work or outdoor home maintenance, locate powerlines. Be especially aware of powerlines that may be hidden by trees.
2. **Stay back 3 metres.** You don’t have to touch a powerline to get a deadly shock. Electricity can jump or “arc” to you or your tools if you get too close. Have someone watch to make sure you stay at least three metres (10 feet) back from powerlines.

3. **Carry ladders sideways.** Never carry ladders upright as they may come in contact or close to powerlines. Check for overhead powerlines before standing a ladder up.
4. **Stay away from dangerous areas.** Keep away from electrical transmission and distribution lines, and never climb utility poles. If a toy ends up inside a transformer station, contact [Elexicon Energy](#). Don't try to retrieve it yourself.
5. **Call or click before you dig.** Powerlines are sometimes buried underground. Before you start construction on a deck, fence or other landscaping project, contact [Ontario One Call](#). Ask to locate all utility-owned underground infrastructure. This includes natural gas, communications and powerlines, and water and wastewater pipes. Private underground powerlines such as supply to a pool or separate garage is not located by Elexicon Energy.
6. **Plant trees away from overhead powerlines.** Determine how large the tree will grow and planting it a safe distance away, so branches don't come close to a powerline. If your trees are in close proximity to powerlines, contact [Elexicon Energy](#) or a utility arborist. Do not prune or remove trees around powerlines yourself.
7. **Watch for downed powerlines.** If you see one, stay back about the length of a school bus (10 metres or 33 feet). Call 9-1-1 and [Elexicon Energy](#) immediately.
8. **Talk to your kids about powerline safety.** Help children find safe places to play, away from utility poles and powerlines. Remind children never to climb trees near powerlines. Make sure they look closely, since leaves and branches can hide the wires. Kids should not play on green boxes on lawns or in parks.

For more information about powerline safety, including tailored tips for homeowners, construction workers, dump truck operators and arborists, visit esasafe.com/safety.

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About Elexicon Energy Inc.

Elexicon Energy provides more than 169,000 residential and business customers in parts of Durham Region and beyond with reliable and affordable energy services. The company is the fourth largest municipally owned electricity distributor in Ontario. Elexicon Energy is owned by five municipalities: the Town of Whitby, the City of Pickering, the Town of Ajax, the City of Belleville and the Municipality of Clarington.

About the Electrical Safety Authority

The Electrical Safety Authority's (ESA) role is to enhance public electrical safety in Ontario. As an administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario, ESA is responsible for administering specific regulations related to the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, the licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians, electricity distribution system safety, and electrical product safety. ESA works extensively with stakeholders throughout the province on education, training and promotion to foster electrical safety.