How to stay safe at home, work and play

BE AWARE OF ELECTRICITY
Electricity is dangerous

It’s hard to imagine life without electricity but as we get more comfortable using it we can also become more complacent. Electricity is a dangerous product.

Always take care when using electrical equipment or working near electrical infrastructure. Information in this brochure can help keep you and your family safe.
Are you using electricity safely?

Always

• Turn off appliances that are not in use.

• Hold the plug, not the cord, to remove an appliance from a power point.

• Use only one double adaptor per power point.

• Stop using an appliance immediately if it becomes faulty and get it checked by a licensed electrical contractor before using it again.

• Take care not to stretch or damage electrical cords. If a cord is damaged, do not use the appliance. If a cord is wound on a reel, unwind it before use to avoid it overheating.

• Always ensure your hands are dry before touching appliances or switches. Take extreme care when using electrical appliances in the bathroom.

• Ensure outdoor power points are weatherproof, approved and suitable for outdoor use.

• Only use party lights that are suitable for outdoor use and string them away from pools and other water sources.

• Be aware of electrical infrastructure on your property such as underground electricity green domes or mini pillars, which contain live electricity cables and can cause electric shock or electrocution if exposed.
Never

- Never attempt to carry out electrical work unless you are a licensed electrical contractor. Electrical work includes re-wiring or replacing power points, moving or replacing light switches, and the installation of permanently connected appliances such as ceiling fans.

- Never remove a plug from a power point until the appliance has been turned off.

- Do not touch electrical appliances if you are wet or near water. Water and electricity do not mix.

- Never use or leave electrical appliances where they can fall into water. Only clean or submerge appliances in water if the manufacturer’s instructions clearly state that it is safe to do so. If liquid spills into an electrical appliance, unplug it and have it checked by a licensed electrical contractor before using it again.

- Never insert metal objects into an appliance or power point. Safety covers prevent or discourage children from doing this and are available from department/hardware stores.

- Never leave electrical appliances unattended around children.

- Never use portable appliances, power tools or extension leads in water or when it is raining. If you have a generator, use on a dry surface. Do not allow it to get wet. It should also have an isolation switch.
A residual current device (RCD) is a safety switch that helps protect you and your family.

When an RCD detects a problem with your power supply, it switches the power off within 10 to 50 milliseconds to prevent electric shock.

Under RCD regulations, all residential homes sold or leased in Western Australia must have a minimum of two RCDs protecting all power point and lighting circuits.

All RCDs have a test button that should be pressed every three months. Pushing the test button simulates a fault and indicates whether or not the RCD is operating correctly. Electric clocks and timers will require resetting after each test.

Electrical inspectors monitor homes which are sold or leased to ensure compliance with the regulations. Breaches attract penalties of up to $15,000 for individuals and up to $100,000 for body corporates.

If you own a residential property and do not intend to sell or lease it, you are not required to have RCDs installed. However, Horizon Power strongly recommends that you consider this potentially life-saving investment.

Remember to use a licensed electrical contractor when installing new or additional RCDs.

For more information, visit www.energysafety.wa.gov.au/RCD
Electricity is dangerous. Do not risk causing harm to you or your family by doing your own electrical work. Use a licensed electrical contractor.

It is a legal requirement that all electrical work is only carried out by qualified electrical tradespeople licensed to work in Western Australia, and who are employed by an electrical contractor licensed to carry out this work.

Licensed electrical contractors have been expertly trained to work safely around electricity, are qualified and will guarantee the quality of their work.
Electrical work includes rewiring or replacing power points, moving or replacing light switches, installing permanently connected electrical appliances such as a ceiling fan or outdoor lights and repairing appliances.

**Licensing information**

Electrical contractors must display their licence number on their advertising, including vehicles and stationery, so remember to check these before an electrical contractor starts work at your premises.

You can check whether an electrical contractor has the necessary qualifications by visiting the EnergySafety website at [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/EnergySafety](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/EnergySafety) and following the link to the Licensing Information System.

**Renovations and home maintenance**

If you are renovating or doing home maintenance, make sure you think about electricity and the impact it may have on where you are working:

- Turn the power off at the main switch if you are doing any household maintenance or renovations.
- Light fittings, switches and power points are connected to live wires, even when switched off, and should not be removed for painting.
- Do not use metal ladders, metal scaffolds or metal painters’ trestles when working close to wiring, as they conduct electricity. Take care not to make contact with electrical cabling when nailing and fixing metal roofing and tile battens.
- When selecting outdoor lights and power points, check that they are weatherproof, approved and suitable for outdoor use. A licensed electrical contractor should also install these.

If you or anyone in your home or business gets an electric shock or a tingling feeling from taps or water pipes, turn off the power at the main switch and call Horizon Power immediately on 13 23 51.

In emergency situations, dial 000.
Electrical infrastructure is all around us, even if not visible. Identifying hazards and planning your work around these will help keep you safe.
Overhead electrical hazards

If you’re working at heights, always check for overhead powerlines before starting any work.

Pay special attention to overhead electrical infrastructure when driving oversize vehicles, carrying high loads, using farming equipment or towing boats.

If transporting a load higher than 4.3 metres (or 4.6 metres for livestock vehicles travelling on nominated routes), contact your local Horizon Power office.

Depending on the route and the size of the load, Horizon Power may need to help you by moving, raising or shielding powerlines or by providing a road escort. If there are any costs involved, we will provide you with a quote.

Underground electrical hazards

More and more of our electricity is now distributed through an underground network. Mini-pillars, or green domes, connect homes to this underground network and are located just inside properties.

Green domes contain live wires and should never be tampered with. If you see any damage, keep well clear and report it to us immediately on 13 23 51.

No matter the size of your project, you should be aware of these assets and the risks they pose.

Dial Before You Dig is a free national community service aimed at preventing, danger damage and disruption to Australia’s complex pipe and cable networks.

You can find out if there are underground assets where you want to work by submitting an application to Dial Before You Dig, either online at www.1100.com.au or by phoning 1100.

We will provide you with plans showing the location of any underground assets on receipt of your application to Dial Before You Dig. Make sure you study the plans you are provided with carefully before you start work.

Unfortunately, not all underground asset owners participate in Dial Before You Dig so it remains important to take care when excavating.
Always follow the Four P’s of excavation

PLAN • POTHOLE • PROTECT • PROCEED

PLAN

Plan your job. Use the Dial Before You Dig service at least two business days before your job is due to begin to ensure you have the correct information you need to carry out a safe project.

POTHOLE

Potholing (hand digging) is a method to assist in establishing the exact location of all underground infrastructure.

PROTECT

Protecting and supporting the exposed infrastructure is the responsibility of the excavator. Always erect safety barriers in areas at risk to protect underground networks.

PROCEED

Proceed only when you have planned, potholed and put the protective measures in place.

For your own safety, never interfere with electrical infrastructure and never attach or tie anything to it. In an emergency, dial 000. If there is any damage to electrical infrastructure, stay clear and report it to us on 13 23 51 so the damage can be fixed quickly and safely.
Trees or branches touching powerlines are one of the main causes of power interruptions and may cause fires and/or other serious accidents.

Horizon Power encourages the planting of the right tree in the right place. Unfortunately, many trees are planted, or have naturally grown, too close to powerlines and need to be trimmed.

Failing to trim your trees can cause power failures, bush fires and serious accidents. In unusual circumstances, trees may even become ‘live’ when they come into contact with powerlines, posing a serious safety risk.

**When do trees need to be trimmed?**

Trees must be trimmed if they are too close to powerlines. In the north of Western Australia, trees should also be trimmed before the summer cyclone season (November-April). Trees in the Mid West and southern parts of the State should be trimmed before winter.
Horizon Power regularly conducts inspections of powerlines to identify where vegetation is growing too close. The previous diagram shows the minimum clearance zone. As a general rule, trees should be no closer than **three metres** to powerlines.

**Which trees am I responsible for?**

It is the resident's responsibility to trim trees on private property, even if they are not the home owner. You may want to check if this is covered in your rental agreement.

Horizon Power works with local councils to carry out vegetation management programs on urban street verges and road reserves.

As a guide, the trees coloured orange in the diagram above are the responsibility of the occupier of Property A; those coloured green are the responsibility of the occupier of Property B.

The tree planted on the verge (blue coloured tree) is the responsibility of the local council.

**Who should trim trees?**

If the trees at your home need to be trimmed, Horizon Power strongly recommends you hire a professional tree contractor as they have the correct training and experience to carry out the work.

Check the Yellow Pages for local tree trimming contractors or visit [www.treeguildwa.asn.au](http://www.treeguildwa.asn.au)
Many people have portable generators to provide a back-up power supply for lighting, refrigerators and other essential appliances during power outages.

To ensure you and your family's safety, and avoid damage to your property, it is important to choose a generator that provides enough power for your needs and to use it carefully.

When purchasing a generator, Horizon Power recommends you select one that is capable of providing more power than you will need to supply your essential appliances. If your appliances try to draw more power than your generator produces, both the generator and appliances may be damaged.

Do not connect a generator to the electrical wiring of your home or office unless a licensed electrical contractor has installed an isolating switch. It is a legal requirement in Western Australia that all electrical work be undertaken by licensed tradespeople.

You can plug an appliance directly into a portable generator but make sure you read and follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid a dangerous malfunction.

Petrol and diesel generators should be operated outdoors and well away from open windows as they produce harmful fumes.
If you feel weak or dizzy while using a generator, move away from the area and find fresh air immediately. You may not be able to smell or see exhaust fumes but they can cause serious harm, even death, very quickly.

To be safe:

- Keep the generator on a dry surface. Do not allow it to get wet or use it in wet conditions.
- Do not operate the generator with wet hands.
- Do not operate the generator in an enclosed or partially enclosed space.
- Never plug a generator into wall outlet as this creates a high risk of electric shock or electrocution, not only on your property but also for neighbours using the same utility transformer.

When refuelling a generator:

- Make sure the generator is switched off and has cooled down before refuelling as it can ignite if fuel is spilled on hot engine parts.
- Only use the type of fuel recommended by the manufacturer.
- Store generator fuel in an approved safety container and well away from fuel-burning appliances such as hot water heaters to avoid leaked fumes igniting.
In an emergency

Report any electrical incidents or faults immediately to Horizon Power by telephoning **13 23 51**

In emergency situations, dial **000**

**Horizon Power**

- Emergency or supply interruptions: **13 23 51**
- Faulty streetlights and poles: **1800 264 914**
- Residential enquiries: **1800 267 926**
- Business enquiries: **1800 737 036**
- TTY: **1800 461 499**

**Other useful numbers**

- Police, Ambulance, Fire: **000**
- State Emergency Service: **132 500**
- WaterCorp (faults and emergencies): **13 13 75**
- Telstra (faults and service difficulties): **13 22 03**
Regional offices

You can visit or contact one of Horizon Power’s regional offices regarding local supply issues.

**Broome**
2-4 McDaniel Road
BROOME WA 6725
Ph: (08) 9192 9900

**Gascoyne & Mid West**
Corner Iles Road & Robinson Street
CARNARVON WA 6701
Ph: (08) 9941 6299

**Karratha**
Stovehill Road
KARRATHA WA 6714
Ph: (08) 9159 7250

**Kununurra**
Lot 228 Messmate Way
KUNUNURRA WA 6743
Ph: (08) 9166 4700

**Esperance**
143 Sims Street
ESPERANCE WA 6450
Ph: (08) 9072 3400

**Port Hedland**
18 Anderson Street
PORT HEDLAND WA 6721
Ph: (08) 9173 8281

www.horizonpower.com.au