

# #RespectThePower: Powerline Safety Awareness Week May 11 to 17 urges Ontarians to be mindful of powerlines

**MISSISSAUGA – May 11, 2015** – May 11 to 17, 2015 is Powerline Safety Awareness Week in Ontario, a time to be reminded of the importance of staying clear of overhead and underground powerlines, particularly when working, doing household chores or having fun outside.

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) and many of Ontario's local electrical utilities are running public awareness programs around the theme of 'Respect the Power.' Touching or even coming within a few metres of an overhead powerline can kill or seriously injure you. Yet all too often powerlines become 'out of sight, out of mind' as people go about daily activities.

ESA's Powerline Safety Awareness campaign includes a comprehensive web site [esasafe.com/powerlinesafety/](http://esasafe.com/powerlinesafety/), compelling [social media content](#), [informational videos](#), and [hard-hitting advertising](#) that target construction workers and homeowners – the two groups most frequently involved in powerline incidents.

"Tragically every year people in Ontario are killed or critically injured from contact with powerlines and electrical utility equipment," said Scott Saint, ESA's Chief Public Safety Officer. "We need everyone to recognize and respect the power and take some simple, yet life-saving safety precautions."

"As the Victoria Day long weekend approaches, I urge all Ontarians to take a moment to increase their own and their family's powerline safety knowledge," said David Oraziotti, Minister of Government and Consumer Services. "Taking the time to learn more now can prevent a tragedy later."

## Five Ways to Respect the Power

1. **Locate the lines.** Before starting any outdoor job whether at work or at home, first look up, look out and locate. Then keep track of where they are as you move around so you're always mindful of the powerlines.
2. **Keep yourself and equipment a safe distance away.** For the kind of powerlines that connect a house to the poles on the street, keep yourself and any equipment (ladders, pruners, tall vehicles, etc.) at least one metre away. For the higher voltage lines that run down streets, stay at least three metres away. Not only is making contact very dangerous but even coming close to the line can cause the electricity to jump or 'arc' through the air and contact you or your equipment.
3. **Never attach or drape anything on a powerline.** Never brace a ladder against a line or near its point of contact to a building. Don't run other lines like antennas or cables on or near powerlines. And never grab a line for balance when working at heights.
4. **Carry equipment horizontally.** Carry ladders, pruners and other long equipment on their side, not vertically as they could connect or attract arcing from an overhead line.
5. **Plant trees away from overhead powerlines.** If your trees have grown into or close to powerlines, contact your local utility. Do not trim trees around powerlines yourself. And call before you dig to ensure underground cables and other utility equipment are located and marked.

For more tree trimming and landscaping tips, visit [esasafe.com](http://esasafe.com)

## **Tips for Kids and their Parents**

1. **Don't fly toys near lines.** Keep kites, remote control helicopters, drones and other airborne toys well away from powerlines.
2. **Electrical equipment is not safe for play.** Don't play on or near the ground-mounted green transformer boxes on lawns or in parks. Never climb utility poles.
3. **Check before tree climbing.** Never climb trees that are near or touching powerlines. Look carefully for hidden powerlines covered by branches and leaves.

### **About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)**

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.

More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found at [www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com), through Twitter @homeandsafety and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority](https://www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority).

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