



Electrical Safety Authority's Chief Public Safety Officer Issues Warning about Installing and Removing Holiday Decorations

*Death of Ontario Man While Installing Holiday Lights
Underscores Need for Vigilance around Powerlines*

Mississauga, ON – December 13, 2011 – The Electrical Safety Authority's Chief Public Safety Officer is issuing a reminder to all Ontarians to exercise caution when installing and removing exterior holiday lights or decorations anywhere near overhead powerlines. The warning follows the recent death of a 29-year-old man in Guelph who was installing holiday lights outside a home.

"While the detailed circumstances are still under investigation, this tragic incident is an unfortunate reminder of the dangers of working near overhead powerlines," said Peter Marcucci, Chief Public Safety Officer, with the Electrical Safety Authority. "In the last five years, there have been 14 electrocutions in Ontario from powerline contact, representing 39 per cent of all electrical contact fatalities in Ontario."

"At this time of year many homeowners and businesses are installing and removing lights or other seasonal decorations on roofs, trees and similar locations," said Marcucci. "It is vitally important to 'look up and look out' for powerline risk. Before you begin work, take note of all powerlines – those on the street and running power to your residence or business – and stay well clear. And be very cautious when working with poles, ladders and other long tools that can reach and make contact with the powerlines."

Advice from the Electrical Safety Authority's Chief Public Safety Officer

- **Look Up** – before beginning any work outside a home or business, look up and note the location of all types of powerlines. Plan to work well away from those areas.
- **Look Out** – anyone other than qualified electrical poleline workers or utility arborists should maintain a distance of at least 3 metres or 10 feet from powerlines.
- **Take care when moving equipment** – handle ladders, poles and other extension tools with care, to ensure you don't inadvertently come close to powerlines. Always carry this equipment horizontally and have a spotter watch to warn you if you are coming close to overhead powerlines.
- **Keep trees clear of powerlines** – ensure that trees on your property don't grow into powerlines. If you are concerned, contact your local electrical utility.

"We want this holiday season to be a safe one for all Ontarians," said Marcucci. "Taking those few extra moments to be vigilant can help ensure this."

About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)

Established in 1999 as a self-sustaining, not-for-profit corporation, the Electrical Safety Authority's mission is to improve electrical safety for the well-being of the people of Ontario. The overall vision of the ESA is to achieve zero electrical accidents, injuries and fatalities across Ontario. More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found on their website www.esasafe.com.

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