

The Theme for October 2020 is: **Overhead Services**

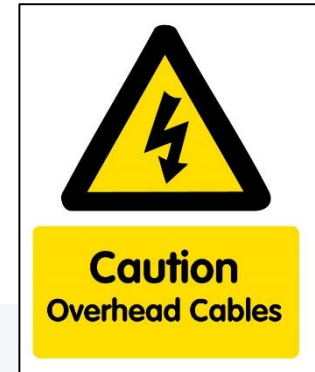
Your Health and Safety

Our Environment

Quality Requirements

Remember:

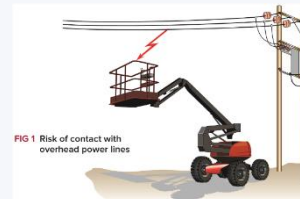
- Its not just overhead Power lines, other types of services such as telecoms may be present overhead.
- Using Excavators, MEWPs, scaffold poles, ladders, tipper vehicles and cranes presents a particularly high risk, especially when Loading, Unloading, Lifting, Stacking and gaining Access & Egress.
- Work may only be carried out in close proximity to live overhead lines when there is no alternative and when the risks are acceptable and can be properly controlled.



Control the Access:

Where there is no work or passage of machinery or equipment under the service however there is work within a distance of 10 m (measured at ground level horizontally from below the nearest wire):

- Erect ground-level barriers to establish a safety zone to keep people and machinery away from the wires.
- Don't use this area should to store materials or machinery.
- Under no circumstances must any part of plant or equipment such as ladders, poles and hand tools be able to encroach within these zones.
- The safety zone should extend 6m horizontally from the nearest wire on either side of the overhead line. The safety zone width may need to be increased on the advice of the line owner or to allow for the possibility of a jib or other moving part encroaching into the safety zone.
- Where plant such as a crane is operating in the area, erect additional high-level indication to warn the operators of the overhead line (A line of coloured plastic flags or 'bunting' mounted 3–6 m above ground level over the barriers is suitable).



Always:

- Identify the type and proximity of overhead lines.
- Treat all overhead lines as uninsulated.
- Consult with the owner of the line to determine (even for temporary / short duration works):
 - Can the line be permanently diverted away from the work area or replaced with underground cables?
 - If not can the overhead line be temporarily switched off / isolated?
 - What is the actual height above ground level.
 - Details of the exclusion zones required around the line.
- Prepare a risk assessment addressing working adjacent / under overhead services that is specific to the site. Take into account any situations that could lead to danger from the overhead wires (emergency / abnormal etc).

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Passing Underneath Overhead Services:

Where plant will pass beneath services

- ✓ Create a passageway through the barriers.
- ✓ Keep the number of passageways to a minimum.
- ✓ Restrict the width of the passageway to the minimum needed for the safe crossing of plant. It is safest if the passageway crosses the route of the line at right angles.
- ✓ Define the route of the passageway using fences and erect goalposts at each end to act as gateways using a rigid, non-conducting material, e.g. timber or plastic pipe, for the goalposts, highlighted with, for example, red and white stripes. If the passageway is too wide to be spanned by a rigid non-conducting goalpost, use tensioned steel wire, earthed at each end, or plastic ropes with bunting attached. These should be positioned further away from the overhead line to prevent them being stretched and the safety clearances being reduced by plant moving towards the line.
- ✓ Ensure the surface of the passageway is levelled, formed-up and well maintained to prevent undue tilting or bouncing of the equipment.
- ✓ Put warning notices at either side of the passageway, on or near the goalposts and on approaches to the crossing giving the crossbar clearance height and instructing drivers to lower jibs, booms, tipper bodies etc and to keep below this height while crossing.
- ✓ Illuminate notices and crossbars at night, or in poor weather conditions, to make sure they are visible, where required.
- ✓ Maintain all barriers and goalposts.



Working Under Overhead Services:

- ✓ Always carry long objects horizontally and close to the ground and position vehicles so that no part can reach into the exclusion zone, even when fully extended.
- ✓ Use physical restraints on machinery such as cranes and excavators to prevent them reaching into the exclusion zone, e.g. height restrictor on excavator and crane jibs. Insulating guards and / or proximity warning devices without other safety precautions are not adequate protection on their own.
- ✓ Brief working squads to understand the risks and prevention measures.
- ✓ Ensure the work is directly supervised by someone who is familiar with the risks and can make sure that the required safety precautions are observed.

see HSE [GS6](#) for further guidance.