



Farm electrical safety is never out of season

One of the greatest hazards on today's farms is the risk of electrocution. Before heading back into the fields this spring, Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) and Safe Electricity remind farm workers to be especially aware of dangers working near overhead power lines, and urge review of farm activities and work practices that take place around all electric lines.

Educate all who work on the farm about power line hazards and make sure everyone knows the location of overhead power lines. Remind workers to keep farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them. The minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side and above lines.

Simply coming too close to a

power line while working is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting material or objects, such as a ladder, pole or a truck.

Many farm electrical accidents involving power lines occur when loading or preparing to transport equipment to fields, or while working on farm machinery near power lines. Sometimes a power line is closer than it looks. When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter to help ensure that contact is not made with a line.

Many farm fatalities have been attributed to portable augers coming in contact with overhead wires. Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level - under 14 feet- before moving

or transporting; use care when raising them.

Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place. If planning a new outbuilding or farm structure, contact SIEC for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines.

For more information on farm electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org and www.siec.coop.

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