

Electrical Safety Authority Warns of stockpiling material near transformer station fences and/or under overhead powerlines

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is reminding members of the public, constructors and property owners of hazards involving stockpiling dirt, sand or snow in the vicinity of overhead powerlines.

Recently a stockpile of sand was placed directly below an overhead high voltage powerline (Picture 1) creating hazards to members of the public and to the workers placing the stockpile while using high reach equipment such as excavators, dump trucks or conveyors in the vicinity of overhead powerlines.

Clearance from final grade to overhead powerlines are designed to protect people from serious electrical injury or fatal shock. Stockpiling materials near or under overhead powerlines decreases the safety clearance increasing the danger (Picture 2).

Fences around electrical equipment such as transformers (substations) are installed at a specific height for the safety of members of the public to prevent unauthorized access to electrical hazards. Stockpiling snow near and higher than the fence allows members of the public unauthorized entry into the substation.

If you see a stockpile of dirt, sand or snow near overhead powerlines or substation fences, stay back and contact your Local Distribution Company or the Electrical Safety Authority to report the concern.

Remember; keep back a minimum of 3.0 m from all overhead powerlines. A person or an object does not have to make direct contact with an overhead powerline to receive an electrical shock. Electricity can jump or “arc”



Picture 1:
Stockpile
of sand
under the
overhead
powerlines



Picture 2:
Construction
workers
stockpile dirt
under the
overhead
powerlines