



Working Safely Around Downed Electrical Wires

As we progress into hurricane season, workers may be exposed to life-threatening danger from downed and low-hanging electrical wires. Electrical hazards multiply for workers involved in cleanup and recovery efforts following major disasters and weather emergencies.

- If you notice downed wires or damaged electrical equipment, contact appropriate utility personnel or 911.
- **Always consider all electrical equipment, lines and conductors to be energized.**
 - Do not assume that a wire is a harmless telephone, television, or fiber-optic cable, and does not carry lethal current.
 - Downed wires can energize other nearby objects, such as fences, water pipes, bushes and trees, and other cables and wires.
- **Never go near a downed or fallen electric power line.**
 - Electricity can spread outward through the ground in a circular shape from the point of contact. As you move away from the center, large dangerous differences in voltages can be created.
- **Never drive over downed power lines.**
 - If contact is made with an energized power line while you are in a vehicle, remain in the vehicle, call for help and do not exit the vehicle unless it is on fire.
 - If you must exit the vehicle, try to jump completely clear. land with both feet together and shuffle away in small steps.

For more information visit: https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/downed_electrical_wires.pdf
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/index.html>

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