

## Contact CenterPoint Energy First

For coordination of work near power lines, contact CenterPoint Energy's Customer Service Department. Our Customer Service Advisors are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and they will put you in contact with the CenterPoint Energy Service Center in your area.

For 24-hour assistance, call:

**(713) 207-2222**

From outside the Houston area,  
call us toll-free:

**(800) 332-7143**

If you would like information on electrical safety programs for your company, contact CenterPoint Energy's Public Safety Department at (713) 945-6707.



10/02



# Construction Safety and the Law

*The Facts About Working Safely  
Around Power Lines*

CenterPoint Energy

# Work Safely... It's the Law

Did you realize that federal regulations and Texas statutes provide specific safety requirements for working around power lines? These regulations were enacted to protect workers from injury and death, and they've proven to be effective if properly followed. These laws apply to people working around power lines, including employers, contractors, owners and others responsible for the work.

Violators are subject to criminal penalties, as well as civil liabilities. Even worse, failing to comply with these requirements could result in serious injury or death to a worker. ALL parties responsible for any such work should understand they risk a substantial liability if workers make electrical contact with power lines.

CenterPoint Energy urges all employers and other responsible parties to stress the subject of electrical safety to workers on the job. The consequences of not doing so can be serious. We, at CenterPoint Energy can and will provide assistance to you upon your request.

As a reminder, we have summarized some of the safety regulations and laws that apply in Texas in order to work around power lines. Please take the time to read completely through the full text of these requirements.

**REMEMBER: ALWAYS CALL CENTERPOINT ENERGY BEFORE WORKING IN THE VICINITY OF ANY POWER LINE.**

## OSHA Regulations\*

1. Employers must establish safety-related work practices to protect employees against the danger of contacting power lines.
2. Before any work is begun, the employer must determine whether the work may bring any worker, tool, or machine near a power line. If so, the employer must post warning signs, advise employees of the location of the lines, the hazards involved, and protective measures to take.
3. Every power line must be treated as energized unless and until the utility indicates that it is not energized.
4. If work is to be performed near power lines, the lines must be de-energized or other protective measures must be taken BEFORE any work begins. If the lines are to be de-energized, arrangements must be made with the electric utility.
5. For power lines of 50,000 volts and below, a worker or any part of a conductive material, tool, piece of equipment or machine must not come within ten (10) feet of an energized line. For power lines above 50,000 volts, this minimum clearance requirement increases four (4) inches for every 10,000 volts.
6. Violators are subject to criminal penalties.

## Texas Law\*\*

1. Work must not be performed around power lines if at any time it is possible that a worker or any part of a tool, machine, piece of equipment or material may come within six (6) feet of the lines.
2. Cranes or similar equipment must not be operated around power lines if at any time it is possible that any part of the equipment may come within ten (10) feet of the lines.
3. The only exception to these requirements is when the parties responsible for the work have effectively guarded against the danger of contacting the lines. Those parties responsible for the work must notify the electric utility at least 48 hours BEFORE the work begins to arrange for measures to guard against contact with the lines. The work may not begin until those parties and the utility have negotiated and taken proper safety precautions, such as de-energizing the lines.
4. Responsible parties that violate this law are subject to criminal penalties. In addition, if a violation results in contact with a power line, they are also liable to the utility for all damages and liability it incurs due to the contact

\* *Code of Federal Regulations, Title 29, Part 1910.180, 1910.333, 1926.416, 1926.417 and 1926.550.*

\*\* *Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 752.*