ETSA Utilities

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FARMERS FEDERATION

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Farmers reminded to Look Up and Live

As farmers across South Australia begin sowing crops, thanks to recent rains, ETSA Utilities and the SA Farmers Federation are reminding everyone to Look Up and Live during this busy time on the land.

Powerlines carry significant electrical charges. Touching them, or even getting close to them, could be fatal or lead to serious injury. So prior to commencing work in the fields, particularly with taller machinery and equipment, farmers and contractors are urged to re-familiarise themselves with any transmission or distribution lines running over properties.

"The risk of injury or electrocution is significant on farming properties due to the presence of powerlines" said ETSA Utilities' General Manager Customer Relations, Sue Filby.

"How close you can safely work near power lines, depends on their voltage and the prevailing weather conditions," she said.

"Generally the higher the voltage, the greater the safe clearance distance required. Clearly, the risk is increased if you are working with tall machinery or equipment. This makes it essential that farm workers check the relative height of equipment and machinery and powerlines before they commence a task."

Carol Vincent, Chief Executive of the South Australian Farmers Federation says that with a busy season ahead it is important to be vigilant about safety.

"In recent years, there have been a number of deaths on farms here in South Australia as well as Victoria," she said.

"We absolutely want to avoid a repeat of such tragedies. It's essential that all farmers and farm contractors are cautious at all times and remember they don't have to touch a power line to be electrocuted or receive an electric shock."

ETSA Utilities is committed to ongoing community education and is working with the SA Farmers Federation to spread the 'Look Up and Live' message. Key points to remember include:

- Always check for powerlines before starting any task;
- Ensure there is safe clearance between you, the equipment you are using, and overhead wires;
- If you don't know them, confirm the recommended clearance distances before starting work. If in any doubt, contact ETSA Utilities on 13 12 61. Information also is available at www.etsautilities.com.au/lookup

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