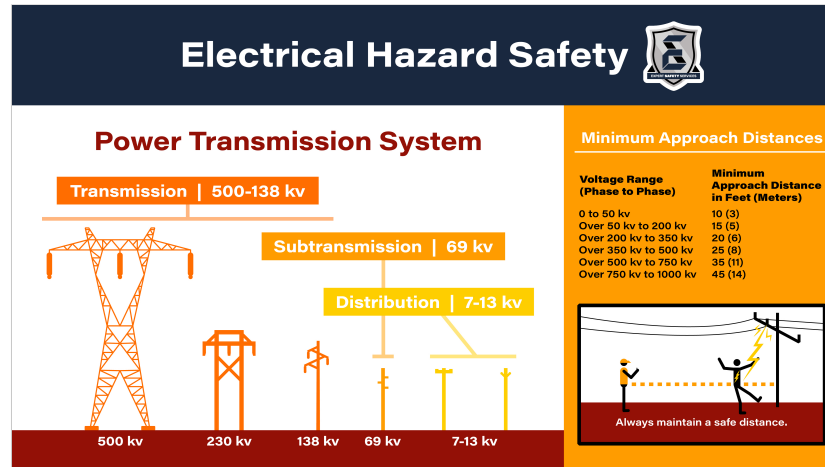


TOOLBOX TALK

Power Lines and Voltage

Use with the IWCA Water-fed Pole Safe Practices, Sections 3 and 4.



Graphic courtesy of Expert Safety Services. Used with permission.

What the graphic shows

- Power lines carry very different voltages. The lines near most buildings are distribution lines. Larger towers and structures generally carry higher voltages.
- The higher the voltage, the greater the minimum approach distance (MAD).
- The MAD is measured from the energized line itself. Electricity can arc across an air gap without the pole touching the line.

What crews do with it

- **Do not judge voltage by how a line or tower looks.** The voltage must be confirmed with the utility.
- **Line verified at 50 kV or less:** the MAD is 10 feet. Keep the operator at least the extended pole length + one-third of that length + 10 feet from the line, in every direction.
- **Line above 50 kV, or voltage not verified:** stop that work and get the required distance from the utility. Crews do not work from the larger distances in the table on their own.
- Treat every power line as energized.

Talk it through

- Where are the power lines, service drops, and transformers on this site?
- Who confirmed the voltage, and with whom?
- How far will the pole be extended, and what is the minimum working distance?
- Where will the pole be raised and lowered, and what happens if it falls?

Site

Date

Led by

This handout is a training aid. It is not part of the IWCA Water-fed Pole Safe Practices document and does not replace it or any applicable regulation.