Seven Statistics on Overhead Power Lines

Ladders, dump trucks, long-handled trim saws and boom lifts all have one thing in common: the potential to come in contact with high-voltage overhead power lines, with potentially deadly consequences for workers and homeowners alike.

1. The second-leading cause of construction worker deaths in the United States, behind falls, is electrocution. (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
2. The US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that ladders be kept at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines of 50,000 volts or less.
3. Electrocution causes about 25 worker fatalities every year in Canada. (Newfoundland Power)
4. One major cause of electrocution is the relocating of ladders in their extended position. These ladders are easily capable of contacting overhead wires.
5. Nine percent of consumer-related electrocutions occurred when ladders touched overhead power lines. (Consumer Product Safety Commission)
6. Injuries related to electricity consist of four main types: fatal electrocution, electric shock, burns, and falls as a result of contact with electrical energy. (US Centers for Disease Control/NIOSH)
7. Power line installation and repair workers in the United States have an occupational fatality rate of 29 per 100,000 employed workers, making their job the seventh of the top 10 most dangerous jobs. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

What do ladders, dump trucks, long-handled trim saws and boom lifts have in common? All of these equipment types have the potential to come in contact with overhead power lines, with devastating results for workers and others in the area. Here are seven statistics relating to overhead power lines.