

# PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Be safe and healthy on the job at with these helpful tips provided by Cool Insuring Agency, Inc..

## Power Line Safety

*Avoid shock from above-ground and underground cables*

Each year, employees are hurt on the job because they fail to be cautious when digging near power lines. Electricity—whether above ground or underground—is a powerful force, and using caution is the best way to avoid injury or death.

### Risky Activities

You are especially at risk of coming into contact with live cables underground when you are using hand tools, cutting into service ducts, trenching and using tools such as mechanical excavators, jackhammers or concrete saws.

### Safety Tips

Follow these safe digging practices to avoid the risk of electric shock or risk of damage to very expensive equipment that is difficult to repair:

- Always assume there are more buried cables present than have been located. In other words, dig with care even when you've used the One Call system to locate underground lines and cables.
- Do not use hand-held power tools and mechanical excavators close to underground cables.
- Before using a mechanical excavator in the vicinity of cables, dig trial holes using hand tools to verify the position and

depth of buried cables.

- Always use insulated hand tools, especially when digging near cables; however, note that even insulated hand tools that are covered in dirt or debris can become conductors of electricity.
- Wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE)—including gloves—to give added protection against shock.
- Treat any cable you find as a live cable until proven otherwise.
- When cables are exposed while digging, take protective measures to ensure they do not become damaged during the course of your work. Achieve this by covering the exposure with items such as timber boarding or sand bags.

### Emergency Procedures

Talk with your employer or supervisor about the proper emergency procedures in case of accidental contact with live underground power lines.



### Watching Your Back

If you have enough personnel on site, consider assigning someone to the role of safety watcher. Make him or her responsible for making sure nothing comes into unsafe contact with above-ground and underground power lines.

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