



Keeping safe around transmission assets

Horticulture

INFORMATION SHEET | JUNE 2026



Transpower's network is made up of transmission towers, substations, fibre optic telecommunication cables, and over 12,000 km of lines that run the length of New Zealand. Our network runs above ground, underground, and across private and rural land. Here's what you need to know to stay safe when working around our assets.

How incidents, injury, and damage can occur when working around our transmission assets

- Being unaware of transmission asset locations, especially underground
- Machinery, irrigators, aircraft, trucks or long loads being too close or touching transmission lines - especially when moving through rows and structures in tight spaces.
- Structures or installations, such as trellis systems, fencing or other orchard infrastructure being positioned closer than intended near poles, towers or lines.
- Existing land, vegetation or plants, such as vines, not being at a safe distance around our assets due to growth or land growing over time.
- Wires, netting or long materials interacting with lines - bringing them closer than expected during normal work.

What can an injury look like?

- You don't need to touch the line for harm to occur. Electricity can arc (jump through the air), and nearby materials or metal structures can become energised, even without contact
- Electricity can transfer through what you're using. Wires, trellis, fences and machinery can carry current to a person.
- Injuries could include electric shock, burns, or internal injury from arc or current flow. Loss of control can lead to falls or serious harm.

That's why it is critical to know where our assets are, and to maintain safe practices when working around them.

In the event of an emergency call 111 then 0800 THE GRID

- Transpower can de-energise the line and provide advice on what to do next.

If a transmission line or cable is struck:

Stay put

- If your machine contacts an overhead transmission line or underground transmission cable or you see a flash, do not move or exit your machine unless there is an immediate danger such as fire.
- Turn off all machinery and call 111 then Transpower on 0800 THE GRID.
- Warn others - do not let anyone approach or touch the transmission line, cable or fibre.

If you must evacuate your machine

- Jump clear - keep both feet together and don't touch the machine and ground at the same time as this creates a path for electricity to flow through your body.
- Shuffle or hop away, small steps reduce the chance of shock.

Don't touch!

- Never touch downed or damaged transmission lines - always treat them as live.
- Electricity can travel through the ground and metal, even if a line appears to be broken or 'dead'.

Staying safe around our assets

Plan ahead

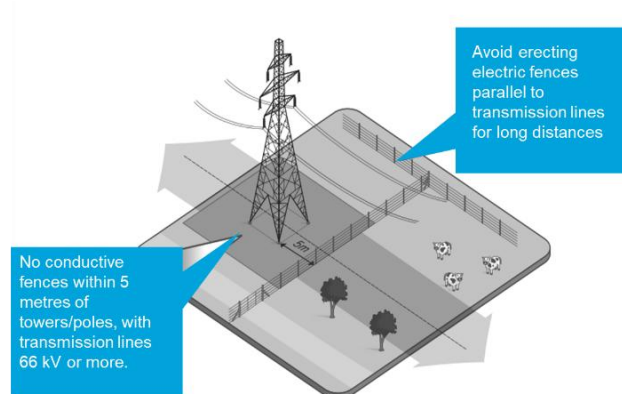
- Identify all the assets within your work area – above and below ground.
- Discuss any plan to alter the ground level under a transmission line/ communications cable with Transpower, to ensure that clearances are not compromised and maintained as your block develops. Written consent may be required before working around Transpower assets.
- Plan your layout early and check before construction to make sure orchard or vineyard design works safely around transmission assets.
- Plan for safe distances when installing or modifying structures like trellis systems, poles, netting and irrigation.
- Use [beforeUdig.co.nz](https://beforeudig.co.nz) – a valuable source of information and asset location maps.

Permanent structures must be built well clear of assets

This applies to pump houses, sheds, stock shelters, permanent fences, or other permanent buildings. Permanent structures must be:

- 12m from any tower.
- 8m from any pole.

Temporary conductive fences should be at least 5m from assets



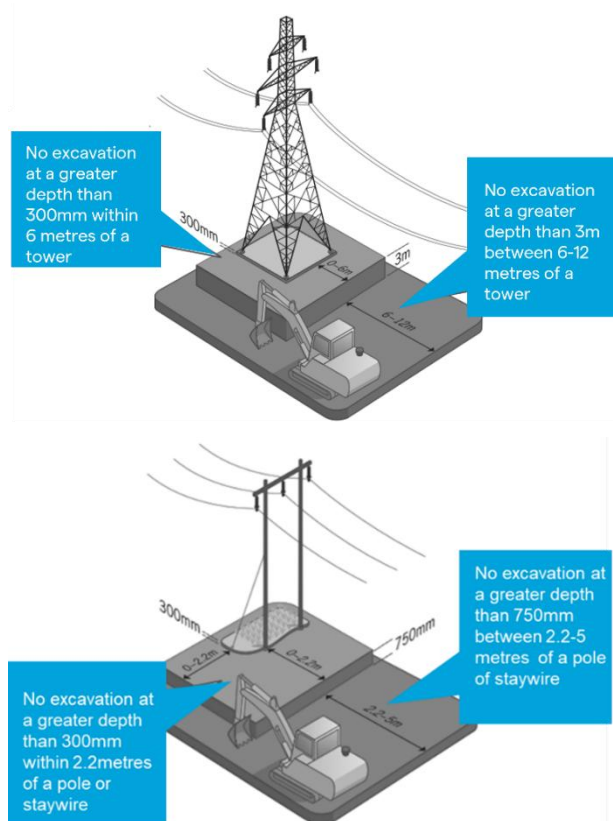
*IMPORTANT

If work is needed within these distances, you **must** contact Transpower for approval **before starting**.

Look up, beneath and around

- Be mindful of where transmission lines are relative to rows, headlands and structures. Transmission lines can be harder to see or judge when working within blocks.
- Be aware of transmission lines during setup and adjustment tasks like tensioning wires or installing netting which can change how things sit near lines.

- Check for underground assets using beforeUdig before digging or driving posts – irrigation, drainage and planting work can expose cables.



Maintain safe distances

- Keep all machinery, equipment, structures and people clear of overhead transmission lines especially when moving through the block (at least 4 metres for 110kV transmission lines and more than 6 metres for 220kV).
- Install physical stops, markers and well-planned layouts (including trellis systems, poles, netting and irrigation) to prevent encroachment into unsafe areas.
- Regularly check equipment height and manage plant growth over time so vines, trees and structures do not drift into unsafe distances.
- Consider how work and growth change overtime and potentially encroach safe distances from transmission assets.



We are here to help

Contact us on **0800 LANDOWNER** for advice and use beforeyoudig.co.nz to locate underground assets.