

Look up, down, all around to stay safe during springtime yard adventures

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As the weather warms and days lengthen, people spend more time outdoors working, playing and tending to projects. With this shift to sunshine and springtime, Pacific Power reminds everyone to stay safe around electrical equipment – particularly overhead and underground power lines.

“Electricity is important to our daily lives, but it’s also unforgiving and can cause serious injury or death if safety precautions aren’t followed,” said Joe Cissna, safety manager for Pacific Power. “Because even momentary electrical contact can have devastating results, your best protection starts with recognizing when your activity could bring you in direct or indirect contact with overhead and underground power lines.”

For instance, climbing a ladder or using a long pole for tree trimming are activities that could put you in contact with electrical lines.

Pacific Power makes it part of its mission to raise awareness about potential electrical safety hazards. The company provides electrical safety information to customers through bill inserts, safety advertisements and information on its website.

Electric cables that are underground can also be dangerous if they are disturbed. Nationally, someone risks their life every six seconds by accidentally striking an underground utility line. To change this alarming statistic, Pacific Power urges customers to protect themselves and their families with one simple act: dial 8-1-1 two days before doing any digging. A call to 8-1-1 is toll free and connects you to a call center that alerts local underground facility owners so they can mark the approximate location of their lines with paint or flags.

“Installing a mailbox or post for a deck or planting a tree are among the many commonplace projects that should trigger a call,” said Cissna. “Those may seem like simple, harmless maintenance projects, but hitting a buried electric line is a very real hazard that puts your life at risk. It’s that simple.”

Even if it didn’t harm you, striking an underground cable could cause a service outage in your neighborhood—and make you potentially responsible for the substantial repair costs.

To learn more about electrical safety or to order free electrical safety materials, call Pacific Power at 888-221-7070 or visit pacificpower.net/safety.