

KNOW THE HEIGHT OF YOUR FARM EQUIPMENT

May 11, 2018 – Did you know that in the past few weeks, there have been several power line contacts with agricultural and construction equipment in Alberta?

In addition to farmers risking serious injury or death, other costs could include extensive power outages and utility repairs that can cost thousands of dollars. This is a 'growing' concern given that the height of farm equipment has doubled since the 1950s, but the height of power lines has remained the same.

Last year, FortisAlberta recorded 48 power line contacts with tractors and other agricultural implements.

Be sure to know the height and width of your farm equipment which includes tractors, grain augers, air seeders and sprayers. Have a power line safety plan and stay safe with these tips:

- If you're buying new equipment, confirm the height, update your GPS with any changes and consider your route to ensure you can cross safely under power lines. Always enlist the help of a spotter. Map your route and locate any overhead power lines and guy wires. If you don't know whether it's safe to cross under or work near a power line, call FortisAlberta for help.
- If your equipment or load is over 5.3 metres in height, you will need to contact your electric utility to arrange an escort (FortisAlberta's High Load number is: 1-888-251-3907).
- Stay seven metres away from power lines. Keep this in mind when parked and operating grain augers or air seeders, or when lifting truck boxes or back hoes.
- Stack and store wisely. Whether it's a grain bin or bale storage, stack and store it seven metres away from power lines.
- If you contact with a power line or damage a power pole, assume the lines and ground around you are energized. Warn others to stay at least 10 metres away and call 911 and your electric utility. If you need to get out of the cab or off of the equipment in the case of fire, make sure you jump free of the equipment with BOTH FEET TOGETHER; don't contact the machinery, and hop away for at least 10 metres.

About FortisAlberta

As owner and operator of more than 60 per cent of Alberta's total electricity distribution network, FortisAlberta's focus is delivering safe and reliable electricity to more than half a million residential, farm and business customers. The Company serves more than 200 communities with 123,000 kilometres of distribution power lines across Alberta.

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