



County of Henrico
Department of Emergency
Management &
Workplace Safety

Verification	Originator	Revised	Issued
Initials	EMWS	EMWS	EMWS
Date	05/01/2015	07/28/2022	08/01/2023

Safety Manual
Chapter 25 Overhead High Voltage Lines

Area of Application:	County of Henrico General Government & Schools	
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Revisions:		
Rev. No.	Date	Description
001	08/31/17	Definitions updated.
002	07/28/2022	Aligned EMWS titles and terminology. Non-substantive changes.

Purpose:

This chapter will help County of Henrico personnel work safely on or near overhead high voltage lines. This chapter meets all requirements adopted by Chapter 30, Section 59.1 of the Code of Virginia.

Scope:

This chapter provides guidance to all County of Henrico employees, or contractors, engaged in work, or other activity, in proximity to overhead high voltage lines.

Program Administration:

With guidance from the Department of Emergency Management & Workplace Safety (EMWS), each Department Head, or his/her designee, will establish policies that outline how the requirements of this chapter and regulations will be met. It shall be the responsibility of the site supervisor, or other affected person(s), to understand the requirements of this chapter. This will help to ensure covered equipment, or other machines or equipment used near overhead high voltage lines, as well as non-machine work, will be operated or performed safely. For assistance, contact EMWS at 804-501-5162.

Exemptions:

This chapter shall not apply to the construction, reconstruction, operation, and maintenance of overhead electrical or communication circuits or conductors and their supporting structures and associated equipment of rail transportation systems, electrical generating, transmission or distribution systems, communication systems, including cable television, or any other publicly or privately owned system provided that such work on any of the foregoing systems is performed by the employees of the owner or operator of the systems or independent contractors engaged on behalf of the owner or operator of the system to perform the work.

Definitions:

Covered Equipment – any mechanical equipment or hoisting equipment, any part of which is capable of vertical, lateral or swinging motion that could cause the equipment to be operated within ten feet of an overhead high voltage line, including but not limited to cranes, derricks, power shovels, drilling rigs and excavating machinery.

Notice – an actual notification given as described on page three of this chapter.

Overhead High Voltage Line – all above ground bare or insulated electrical conductors of voltage in excess of 600 volts measured between conductors or measured between a conductor and the ground, except those conductors that are de-energized and grounded or that are enclosed in rigid metallic conduit or flexible armored conduit.



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Person – a natural person or persons, firm, business association, company, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity.

Responsible Person – the person performing the work or controlling the work at the job site.

Warning Sign – a weather-resistant sign with a dimension not less than five inches by seven inches with a yellow background and black lettering reading as follows: "WARNING – UNLAWFUL TO OPERATE THIS EQUIPMENT WITHIN TEN FEET OF OVERHEAD HIGH VOLTAGE LINES" or other equally effective warning signs as may be approved for use by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board or the Commissioner of Labor and Industry (Virginia Occupational Safety & Health).

Work – means the physical act of performing or preparing to perform any activity under, over, by, or near overhead high voltage lines, including, but not limited to, the operation, erection, handling, storage, or transportation of any tools, machinery, ladders, antennas, equipment, covered equipment, supplies, materials, or apparatus, or the moving of any house or other structure, whenever such activity is done by a person or entity in pursuit of his trade or business.

Prohibited Activities:

- A. No person shall, individually or through an agent or employee, perform, or require any other person to perform, any work as defined above, that will cause any person or tools, machinery, ladders, antennas, equipment, covered equipment, supplies, materials, or apparatus to be placed within 10 (3.1 meters) of any high voltage line.
- B. A clearance greater than 10 feet (3.1 meters) may be required under certain circumstances by the Virginia Occupational Safety & Health (VOSH) Standards adopted by the Safety and Health Codes Board, and enforced by VOSH.
- C. No person shall, individually or through an agent or employee or as an agent or employee, operate any covered equipment within ten feet of any overhead high voltage line, or greater clearance if required by established code.

Warning Signs:

- A. No person, either as an employee or contractor, shall operate mechanical equipment of any kind in proximity to overhead high voltage line(s) unless a warning sign has been posted and maintained. Whenever an extendable ladder(s) is used, a warning sign shall be on display.
- B. Signs shall be located so that the operator at the controls of any equipment may read the signage easily.
- C. Arrange warnings so that the number of signs and their locations are readily visible from a distance of no less than twelve feet from any equipment operator or other people engaged in work operations.

Temporary Safety Arrangements:

- A. No County of Henrico employees shall ever work closer to overhead high voltage line(s) than is permitted by this chapter, which is ten feet or as per Chapter 30 59.1 of the Code of Virginia.



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- B. Whenever a non-county contractor/person must work closer to overhead high voltage line(s) than what is permitted by this chapter, the contractor/person responsible shall notify the owner of the line at least forty-eight hours in advance, excluding Saturday, Sunday and recognized state and federal holidays. In emergency situations where the presence of police and/or fire and rescue is required, the affected police or fire station shall be notified as soon as possible under the circumstances, that overhead work is scheduled in the area.
- C. If time permits, the owner of, or entity maintaining, the overhead line(s) shall research and prepare whatever safety precautions are necessary five working days prior to the date work begins. The work shall be completed promptly and without unnecessary interruption, and shall be consistent with the owner's needs. Safety precautions may include installing temporary barriers that prevent contact between the overhead lines and conductive material, equipment, or persons. Temporary measures such as de-energization, grounding, temporary relocation or raising of lines, or other such measures found to be appropriate in the judgment of the owner or operator of the lines may also be used.
- D. When requested, the owner of, or the entity maintaining, the high voltage line shall provide, within a reasonable period, the estimated cost of any safety precaution materials not available otherwise. Prior to the start date, an estimate of the time needed to complete the work is preferred.

Notification:

- A. Every work notice served by any person to the owner, or entity maintaining, the overhead line(s) shall include the following information:
 - 1. The name of the individual serving such notice;
 - 2. The location of the proposed work;
 - 3. The name, address and main (or mobile) telephone number of the person or company responsible for the work;
 - 4. The on-site telephone number, if one is available;
 - 5. The scope of the proposed work, and the materials and methods needed to complete the job;
 - 6. The name of the person for whom the proposed work is being performed;
 - 7. The time and date of the notice; and
 - 8. The approximate date and time when the work is to begin.
- B. If the notification is made by telephone, a record shall be maintained by the owner or notified, and the person giving the notice to document compliance.
- C. To facilitate notification, every operator of overhead high voltage lines shall publish a phone number(s) which, when called, will provide initial notification of the need to arrange for the temporary safety arrangements pursuant to this chapter.

Responsibility:

The site supervisor shall ensure all provisions of this chapter are enforced.

Disclaimer:

Although every effort has been made to ensure this Chapter addresses all applicable regulations, it is the responsibility of each department to maintain compliance.