

SAFETY FIRST

ELECTRICAL WIRES AND HAZARDS

Electrical hazards can lead to tough situations for employees in the solid waste industry. Whether working inside under precarious conditions or working outside following weather emergencies, the danger these team members face is real and potentially life threatening. OSHA has issued Rules to Live By regarding electrical wire safety:

- Do not assume any wire is a harmless telephone, television, or fiber-optic cable and does not carry lethal current.
- Do not assume that a downed power line is safe simply because it is on the ground or not sparking.
- Treat everything electrical as energized until tested and proven to be de-energized.
- Never go near a downed or fallen electric power line.
- Never drive over downed power lines. Assume that they are energized.
- If contact is made with an energized power line while you are in a vehicle, remain calm and do not get out unless the vehicle is on fire. In that case, call for help.
- If you must exit any equipment because of a fire or other safety reasons, try to jump completely clear, making sure that you do not touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Land with both feet together and shuffle away in small steps to minimize the path of electric current and avoid electrical shock. Be careful to maintain your balance.



The safest plan is to never go near a downed or fallen electric power line, and to treat all electrical wires as unsafe until proven otherwise. [Learn more on OSHA's website.](#)



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