

# Take a sec to check ...

## Electricity Safety Information 2023

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**TAKE A SEC**  
TO CHECK LIST



WINTER SAFETY CHECKLIST

## As it cools down this winter, take a sec to check that you're using energy safely



Check your electric blanket for hot spots or damage before you use it for the winter season. Turn it on high for 15 minutes, turn it off, then feel for any unusually hot spots that indicate it needs to be replaced.



Get your gas appliances repaired, monitored and/or installed by a licensed gas fitter. It's the law.



If your electronics have any damage or any rattling parts, don't use them. Replace them or get them professionally repaired.



Always plug heaters into wall sockets, not multiboards.



If you smell gas inside, immediately get outside and call 111 or your gas supplier.



Turn off electric blankets before you get into bed.



Make sure there is a metre of space around heaters.



**Share this list with your whānau, mates and co-workers to make sure they stay safe too.**

## Real estate signs on road reserve

### Electricity Safety Information 2022

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Nelson Electricity has undertaken awareness campaigns for real estate agent signage over the years. Below is a classic example of a near-miss situation. Waratahs have been dug into the ground without proper cable locates having been undertaken. The waratahs are right on top of underground electricity cables and a close call situation arose where the posts were only millimetres away from causing major damage to the cables in the ground.

Nelson Electricity once again reiterates the need for caution when placing signs on road reserve. You just don't know what is in the ground and what can kill you. Live electricity is closer than you think, and people seem to forget about it being overhead as well as underground.

It's a timely reminder about the dangers of live electricity cables in the ground.



# **Nelson Electricity safety advertisements**

## **Electricity Safety Information 2020**

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Nelson Electricity has undertaken a public safety awareness campaign at the end of 2019 and into 2020 and advertised in the local free Nelson Weekly newspaper delivered to homes in the central Nelson city area.

See the three separate PDF documents highlighting what to do when overhead lines fall, what to do when wanting to dig and also safety around the home for families.

We wish all our 9,200 electricity consumers a safe Covid-19 2020 year which has proved challenging for all.!



# Kids, take charge of your electrical safety!

## Electricity Safety Information 2019

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Electricity is amazing stuff. It can power everything from your iPad, a car, a sports stadium, a gaming console ... however, it can also be dangerous.

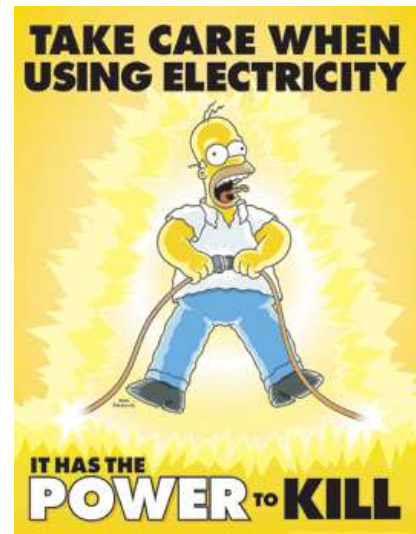
Electrical safety for kids is really important. Kids don't always understand its dangers, so it's important to teach them how to take charge of their electrical safety.

Here are 15 tips to keep kids safe around electricity:

### How to be spark smart

1. Never put an object into a power point (other than a power plug).
2. Don't overload one power point or power board.
3. Use plug caps when you have small children in the house.
4. Pull from the plug, not the cord.
5. Never put metal objects in the toaster.
6. Don't put objects containing metal in the microwave. Watch out for gold-lined cups and plates as well as kitchen foil.
7. Never touch a worn, frayed or damaged electrical cord. If you find one, tell an adult immediately.
8. Never use electrical appliances if you're wet, standing in water or near water.
9. Never put drinks on top of your video game console or other electrical devices.
10. Keep electrical wires and appliance cords away from heaters.
11. Always turn off a light at the switch before changing a bulb.
12. Stay away from power lines. Never climb trees near power lines or touch power lines if they fall.
13. Don't use kites, balloons or remote-controlled drones or planes near power lines.
14. Never throw things onto power lines.
15. Stay away from transformers and electricity substations.
16. Never swim during a thunderstorm.
17. Never plug in an electrical appliance near a pool.

Children are commonly injured by poking objects inside appliances or unused power points, or by playing with appliances. A lot of childhood electrical injuries happened in the home. **Remember: if you're not sure, ask an adult!**





# Electricity Safety Information 2018

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## Electric and Magnetic fields

Electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) are found everywhere. They're part of the natural environment and present in the atmosphere. They're also produced wherever electricity or electrical equipment is in use. Health concerns have been increasingly discussed due to numerous technological advances (eg; mobile communications (cell phones), computers, microwaves) of which electric and magnetic fields are a by-product.



### Meeting the needs of our customers and responsible design

Nelson's growth, and the increased demand for electricity from customers, requires the continuous upgrade and reinforcement of our electricity distribution network to meet the needs of the community. We take very seriously the health and safety of our customers, staff and public.

We're not an authority on EMFs, so we defer to the national and international authorities for best practice and health guidelines for EMF levels. The NZ guideline used for acceptable exposure levels is the Ministry of Health National Radiation Laboratory guideline, which in turn refers to the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

The NZ recommended safe continuous exposure limit for magnetic fields, for the general public, is 100 microteslas ( $\mu\text{T}$ ). This exposure limit is the same as those specified in Australia, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The EMF levels of our electricity network lines and equipment comply with and are well below those limits.

### All electrical equipment produces EMFs

When turned on or in standby modes your computer, television, hair dryer, clock radio and refrigerator, for example, all produce EMFs. The strength of EMFs reduces rapidly with distance from the source.

Common household and office appliances produce EMF levels which are comparable with Nelson Electricity's electricity equipment and substations. For example, an electric kettle produces up to  $1\mu\text{T}$ , a computer up to  $2\mu\text{T}$ , a Nelson Electricity substation (at peak load and at the boundary) less than  $0.1\mu\text{T}$  for a small substation, ranging up to around  $5\mu\text{T}$  for a very large installation.

### Further information about EMFs:

- The New Zealand Ministry of Health's Radiation Safety [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz) Refer to their publication, Electric and magnetic Fields and your Health.

# Electricity Safety Tips 2018

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## Energy Safety: Summer 2017/18 campaign

Although it's officially autumn as of 1st March, the weather is still allowing us to take advantage of the outdoor late summer/early autumn weather. WorkSafe have put together an excellent marketing campaign for consumers when enjoying the outdoors and it's still worth promoting whilst we're still enjoying the warm weather -

<https://worksafe.govt.nz/about-us/campaigns/energy-safety-summer/>

Enjoy the last of the warm weather before the cooler days come upon us, and remember to stay safe!



# Electricity Safety Tips 2018

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## Maintaining Clearances Around Power Lines

### Power line safety

- Touching a power line is dangerous and can result in serious injury or property damage.
- Electricity can spark or jump across a gap. You can be some distance away from a power line and still receive an electric shock or severe burns.
- Overhead lines move due to the effects of wind, temperature and load on the line, so always be cautious around them.

### Safe clearances

Safe clearances between building work and power lines minimise the risk of electric shock, fire, power cuts, or damage to property and power lines.

The minimum safe clearance between power lines and buildings depends on the voltage of the power line and the type of conductor.

Types of power lines can usually be recognised by their construction and by the type of insulator or number of disc insulators which separate the power line from the power pole or tower.



To protect people and property, minimum safe clearances from power lines have been established in Regulations under the [NZ Electrical Code of Practice for Electrical Safety Distances \(NZECP 34:2001\)](#). Prior to any planned construction a process for establishing safe distances from power lines must be undertaken to comply with this code of practice.

For all of the above you must check with your electricity supplier to find out what the power line voltage is so you can establish the right clearance.

# Electricity Safety Tips 2017

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## Key Safety Tips

We use electricity every day so it is easy to take for granted. This is when electrical accidents can occur. Follow the safety guidelines below to prevent electrical accidents and stay safe.



- Water is a conductor. To avoid electric shock, keep all cords and appliances dry and clear of water or damp areas, both inside and outside.
- Always have dry hands when touching electrical appliances or sockets.
- Use residual current devices (RCDs) in the damp areas in your home, such as the bathroom, laundry, kitchen, garage, pools and spas, or when working with electrical equipment outside. An RCD monitors electric currents flowing along a circuit. If it detects a current being diverted to the earth (such as through a person), it cuts the power off instantly – preventing an electric shock being fatal.
- Make sure all electric cords are in good condition before using them. Check for any damaged or exposed wires, fraying or cracked or broken power sockets or plug tops. Replace any damaged leads correctly or have them professionally repaired.
- Limit the number of appliances plugged into an outlet or extension cord to avoid overloading. Only use one heater per outlet.
- Check and replace any outlets where the plug does not fit firmly into the outlet – a loose contact is unsafe.
- Always supervise appliances when in use. When not in use, switch them off at the wall and unplug.
- Buy the latest electrical safety products when renovating and rewiring your home.
- Always employ a licensed electrical worker for electrical repairs, to ensure the work is done to legal safety standards. Ask to see their practising licence and make sure you receive a Certificate of Compliance for all electrical work done on installations and fittings. Ask for an Electrical Safety Certificate for repair work done on appliances.
- When changing fuses or doing electrical work around the house, or if there is an electrical problem, always disconnect the power by turning the main power switch off first.



# Electricity Safety Tips 2017

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## Electric Vehicle Safety

With Electric Vehicles becoming more and more popular in New Zealand, Energy Safety developed questions and answers as part of Drive Electric Week 2016 and made these available for consumers via their website.

The below link takes you to the Energy Safety website for further information that might alleviate concerns about Electric Vehicle and their operational safety.



<http://www.energysafety.govt.nz/consumer/safety-alerts/how-to-charge-your-electric-vehicle-safely>

An electric vehicle charger is been installed at Millers Acre carpark here in Nelson city for use by consumers for charging their vehicle. Feel free to visit this location for further advice and information.

# Electricity Around the Farm

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## Underground cables

- Take care when digging post holes or driving stakes or standards – cables are not always laid in a straight line and depths can vary. Cables cannot withstand a blow from a tool, and damaging one may cause an electric shock.
- If a cable becomes damaged or you suspect damage, contact your local power company immediately to report the problem and location.



## Power lines

- Make sure tall equipment is kept well clear of overhead power lines.
- People climbing over stock trucks or high loads of hay must avoid overhead lines.
- Keep power lines on your property in good condition. If repairs are necessary contact a registered electrician or your electricity supplier immediately.
- Be sure no power lines run through or near any tree you or any children climb. Even if power lines aren't touching the tree, they could touch it after your weight is added to a branch.
- Keep your trees trimmed a minimum of 4 metres from of all wires. Notify your local power company if there is likelihood of danger to yourself or family from a tree falling against the overhead lines.

## Electric fences and fencing wire

- Do not connect any other mains-operated equipment to an electric fence unless the manufacturer guarantees that the isolation between its mains and fence circuits is not less than that of the energiser.
- Install electric fence wires in accordance with Australia/New Zealand standard AS/NZS 3014. Details and downloads are available from [the Standards New Zealand website](#).
- Display prominent signs on your electric fences when the public may legally gain access to them.



Fencing wire can flick upwards and touch (or even simply come close to) overhead power lines, resulting in electric shocks, so be aware how close you are to overhead lines.

## Gas Safety Campaign Launched 2016

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Gas is instant, reliable and efficient but it needs to be used safely. That's the message of Energy Safety's gas safety campaign which launched at the end of July.

The education and awareness campaign will run for 16 weeks throughout winter and into spring and aims to help millions of New Zealanders use gas and LPG safely in the home. It focuses on four key safety issues:

- Using a portable LPG cabinet heater
- Installing and maintaining a gas appliance
- Using a gas cooker in a caravan
- What to do if you smell gas.



"How's the grilling? Should I call in pizza yet?"

"We want to reach as many people as possible and these four focus areas are where we see the most incidents," says Energy Safety's Manager, Mark Wogan. "LPG cabinet heaters have caused the deaths of four people over the past five years. Another three have died in gas accidents in caravans over seven years."

"We also want to remind Kiwis to use a qualified gas fitter to install any gas appliance - it's not safe or legal to just do it yourself. If you smell gas indoors, don't muck around – if safe to do so turn off all gas appliances and get a licenced gas worker to check the installation. If an appliance is poorly maintained or faulty it can produce poisonous carbon monoxide."

The campaign will play a key role in educating the public. "Gas and LPG are convenient sources of energy but to enjoy their benefits the public need to get on board with the campaign's safety tips."

The campaign was released online and on social media, with targeted radio and print adverts complementing the online presence. There is also a dedicated gas safety website so people can check they are using gas safely. At that site you can view the campaign's light-hearted animations designed to get across a serious safety message.

For more information: [www.worksafe.govt.nz/gassafety](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz/gassafety)

## Public Safety Radio Messages 2016

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Nelson Electricity is currently running radio safety messages on all aspects of electrical safety. If you come across fallen power lines or are digging around cables on your property or on the street - your first point of contact is Nelson Electricity on 03 546 9256. This number is answered 24/7 by our call answering service and emergencies can be immediately dispatched to the fault contractor.



However, anything which is not emergency related can also be dealt with immediately by Nelson Electricity staff. Refer to our "Contacts" page for direct dial to appropriate NEL staff member.

Once again, stay safe out there.

## Children and Electricity

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Young children are curious and will play with anything. Ideally, they should never be left alone in a room where electric appliances or fittings are in use. It takes only a moment for a child to poke something into a heater or electrical outlet, pull on a cord or topple an appliance.



There have been cases of children being killed or injured as a result of sticking objects into power points or multi-outlet boxes, heaters or other appliances. To prevent this happening, you should:

- Arrange furniture so that children have room to play away from heaters and other appliances. Ensure that heavy appliances - like TV sets - stand on furniture intended to take their weight. Position them so that they are stable and not likely to fall on any child who may bump into it or climb onto it to reach something on a nearby shelf. Fatal accidents have happened!
- Always choose shuttered sockets and recessed outlets when new electrical work is being done, especially for sockets accessible to toddlers and young children.
- For sockets accessible to toddlers and young children, use plastic safety plugs in all unused power points that don't have safety shutters. Ensure safety plugs are a firm fit and impossible for little fingers to remove.
- Multi-boxes or powerboards should be kept out of reach, preferably on a wall bracket. If this cannot be done, use a multi-box cover. If possible buy multi-boxes with shuttered outlets and an integral RCD.
- When you finish using appliances like hair dryers, put them away so that children don't play with them.
- Use a short cord on your electric jugs and kettles to prevent children from pulling them down onto themselves and getting badly burned or scalded.
- Keep metal objects like keys, scissors or nail files out of reach so they can't be poked into socket-outlets, heaters or other electrical outlets.

Teach your children about the dangers of electricity and demonstrate safe behaviour. They will generally follow your example.



## Electric Shock

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If someone receives an electric shock around the home do not touch them. Switch the power off at the main power switch. If you touch the person while they are still in contact with the electrical current you will also get an electric shock, or be electrocuted.

The longer a person is in contact with the power source, the more likely the shock will be fatal. If it is not possible to turn the power off, use an insulated object such as a broom with a dry wooden handle to push the victim clear of the source of shock. Never choose anything even slightly damp to help rescue the victim.

Phone for an ambulance immediately by dialling the Emergency Number 111.

Administer appropriate first aid such as CPR. If you have not had first aid training, the emergency operator may be able to give you directions until help arrives.

In all cases of electric shock, even if the victim feels fine, it is recommended that you seek medical treatment and advice immediately. Visit your local doctor or after hours medical centre.



## Digging Safety Tips

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With warmer weather on the way. It's only natural to want to get out and maintain our properties. However, before digging it's a good idea to think about what's in the ground. Check for any underground gas, power, telephone or water services before you dig. Avoiding damage to those services means you and your property will be safer.



### Check before you dig!

- Underground services could be located between your front boundary and the footpath or roadway. You may also have underground services supplying your own property.
- When you do any work that involves ground penetration, including digging, placing fence posts, or driving in stakes, make sure that area is clear of any utility services.
- Contact your local council to locate utilities such as water, storm water, and sewage.
- Your energy supplier should be able to tell you where electrical cables or gas lines run. In some areas there may be more than one set of gas mains.
- Damaging or penetrating underground services could result in serious personal injury or death, significant property damage, energy supply disruption, and significant repair costs.



### Ground rules

- Remember to check for the presence of any underground power cables or other services before you begin working.
- Get service reference maps or have your services located before you start working.
- Information provided by a plan or marked on site may not be absolutely accurate, so we recommend you use a location service contractor. Cable locations may not be exact, building lines or curb lines may have shifted, and depths may have changed due to road/footpath reconstruction.
- Prior to any work carried out in any road reserve, you must obtain consent with the relevant Territorial Authority (your city or district council).

If you aren't certain of the location of cables, you must hand-dig to locate them. It is your responsibility to pothole and verify the position and depth of cables before beginning work.

## Speed Causes Damage!

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Recently Nelson Electricity had two incidences of vehicles driving out of control at excessive speeds and crashing into a service box on Atawhai Drive and a power pole on Washington Road. Not only were local residents affected by power outages but the cost of repairs to damaged Nelson Electricity assets was significant.

In both instances the Police were involved and the drivers are awaiting results of tests to determine any prosecution through the Justice system.

We are constantly being reminded about drink driving and the need to slow down on our roads. Not only are people's lives at risk but also assets on the side of the road which in turn can have significant implication on the public who rely on electricity.

Driver safety messages still need to be reinforced, and if you're uncertain on the roads or if conditions play a factor, then slow down on our streets!

If you do lose power to your house as a result of an accident on the street, then don't hesitate to ring Nelson Electricity on ph 03 546 9256 and report the power outage and location of any accident. It helps identify the problem immediately for fault crews to attend to.



## Lines Down

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Never touch, move, or go near any kind of downed or hanging line - even if it looks harmless. Do not assume that the line is just a telephone line. Use extreme caution. Going near it could cause serious injury or electrocution. In fact, anything touching a downed line may be dangerous.



### What to do if you see a downed line

- contact us on 03 546 9256 or contact the police on 111
- treat all lines as alive until advised safe by us
- never touch a downed line - it may still be alive
- keep everyone well clear - at least 10 metres away
- do not try to move tree limbs or other objects that are on or near the line.

### Lines on vehicles

If a line falls on a vehicle, the vehicle may be alive. Any person attempting to touch or leave the vehicle could be electrocuted.

If possible, stay in the vehicle until we have made the line safe. If you have to get out, jump as far away as possible keeping both feet together. NEVER touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

### Parents and teachers

Teach children in your care not to go anywhere near lines lying on the ground or hanging off poles. Advise them to notify an adult and to call the police on 111 or us on 03 546 9256.

## Summer Safety Tips 2014

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Summer has arrived and outdoor activities are a must-do for those wanting to enjoy the Nelson sunshine.

It's timely to remind boaties to watch out for any overhead power lines when taking boats in and out of the water. Boaties in Nelson city can get complacent because the marina area is a section of underground electricity network but boaties should be aware when taking their boats out



beyond the network boundaries that other electricity network companies aren't the same and many overhead power lines exist for boaties in and around areas to launch boats.

Kites can also be a good idea to get out and fly. It's a good idea to utilise large park areas like Neale Park or Victory Square for these activities as these reserves are clear of overhead power lines.

Nelson Electricity is also commencing tree trimming and felling for the new year so if you have or see trees close to overhead power lines then Nelson Electricity will more than likely be in touch with you to arrange the appropriate trims/fells for the new year. Even though our spring was a dry one we have still experienced the annual tree growth, so feel free to contact us if you'd like further information on when the vegetation removal is to take place.

And to finish on, should you have a fault do call our 24 hour fault line on 03 546 9256 to report any details and this can be attended to immediately.



## Tree Awareness

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Spring has arrived with plenty of sunshine and warmth in the air, as well as lots of growth in the garden.

We advise consumers to watch out for the spring growth on their trees especially if they are close to overhead service mains on your property or overhead network power lines which may be on the street frontage. We can recommend to you the appropriate arborists who are specifically skilled and trained at trimming trees close to live lines as we advise that it is dangerous to attempt for those unqualified and inexperienced.



Although, for those consumers who prefer to carry out their own tree trimming, we can provide a free "safety disconnect". This service is available Monday to Friday, 8.00 am to 5.00 pm so feel free to call Nelson Electricity (03 546 9256) to arrange through our Fault Contractor (DELTA). They will arrange to meet with you onsite to discuss power disconnection whilst you undertake your tree trimming.



## **Danger Labels**

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Autumn has arrived and it's a final fling to enjoy outdoor activities in the Nelson sunshine before the cold of winter arrives.

As a result of the hot summer Nelson Electricity has upgraded its danger labels that are fixed to power boxes and substations along the streets of Nelson city. These danger labels are now UV protected to prevent fading in the harsh Nelson ultra-violet light. Danger labels found to be deteriorating as a result of the weather, are being replaced. These danger labels have the Nelson Electricity logo and contact phone number. Especially important if you have seen any damaged power boxes or substations and need a phone number to call and report immediately.

As well as Nelson Electricity network assets being labelled with appropriate danger labels, there is also a unique identification number for our own audit purposes. If you spot any vandalism or damage of any kind to our network assets, don't hesitate to call the number on the label as this is our 24 hour phone number (03 546 9256) and report any details so they can be attended to immediately by fault crews.

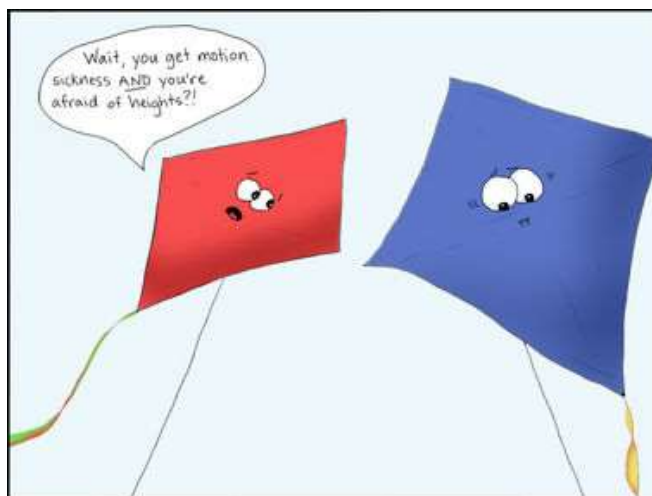


## Boats, Kites, Trees

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Summer has arrived and outdoor activities are a must-do for those wanting to enjoy the Nelson sunshine.

It's timely to remind boaties to watch out for any overhead power lines when taking boats in and out of the water. Boaties in Nelson city can get complacent because the marina area is a section of underground electricity network but



boaties should be aware when taking their boats out beyond the network boundaries that other electricity network companies aren't the same and many overhead power lines exist for boaties in and around areas to launch boats.

Kites can also be a good idea to get out and fly. It's a good idea to utilise large park areas like Neale Park or Victory Square for these activities as these reserves are clear of overhead power lines.

Nelson Electricity is also commencing tree trimming and felling for the new year so if you have or see trees close to overhead power lines then Nelson Electricity will more than likely be in touch with you to arrange the appropriate trims/fells for the new year especially since our December was quite a wet month and this accelerated a lot of tree growth, however, feel free to contact us if you'd like further information on when the vegetation removal is to take place.

And to finish on, should you have a fault do call our 24 hour fault line on 03 546 9256 to report any details and this can be attended to immediately.

## What to do in a power failure?

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Spring has arrived and the sun begins to warm up and gardens begin grow. But so too does unsettled and at times unseasonable weather conditions. Spring storms can occur and bring winds and rain and result in power outages where weather is severe. Unplanned electricity outages can happen and cause disruption to a few or many consumers. When an outage occurs treat all lines as live at all times.

Below is a checklist to know what to do during a power failure.

- Check and see if your neighbours have electricity. If they do, check your fuses or mains switch to rule out problems with electricity inside your home. Another useful check is to see if the street lights are on in your street.
- Once you're sure it's a power failure, call your local electricity supplier and let them know. Do not call 111 unless you have a real emergency.
- Use a transistor radio and listen to your local radio station for updates.
- Use a torch when it gets dark, avoid candles because of the fire risk.
- Unplug computers, TVs and other sensitive appliances which will avoid possible damage when electricity comes back on.
- Turn off all but one of the lights that were on, so you will notice when electricity is restored.
- Turn off heat-producing appliances like electric irons and heaters to prevent fires in case no one is home when power is restored.
- Traffic lights and railroad crossings may not work. If you are in a car, remind the driver to stop, look and listen for cross traffic.
- If you are stuck in a lift, stay there and wait for help. Never try to climb out between floors.

If you have a fault call our 24 hour fault line on 03 546 9256 to report any details.



## Heating

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With winter's arrival it's time to crank up the heat and keep ourselves and our houses warm and toasty! We are all mindful, however, of the cost involved with additional heating needed to heat homes. Check the age and condition of heating appliances and, if in doubt, get your appliances checked for safety. There are many more efficient heating appliances on the market today so it's worth shopping around to determine what's best for you and your family. But do remember, anything plugged in and using electricity will still use electricity units so it's a good idea to keep watch on your meterboard to keep track of your usage over winter. Even keep a daily tally of the units being used on your meter as a way of knowing exactly what you are using.



Electricity retailers also have payment options which you may find easier to assist you with paying off those winter power bills if it's proving to be a bit of a struggle, so it could be a good idea to call and find out what is available to you.

## **General Safety**

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Have you been viewing our general safety advertisements in the local Nelson Weekly? Nelson Electricity has been advertising every month reminding consumers of the general risks they might encounter in their everyday lives when living with electricity.

Anything from dangers encountered in the home environment from digging around underground cables or ladders and trees around overhead power lines to flying kites in the local park close to overhead network power lines. It is all in an attempt to keep consumers informed of the dangers when around live electricity cables, something we so often take for granted in our busy day to day lives.

With the lovely summer it has been important to stress the outdoor electricity issues because as Kiwis we love nothing better to get out and spend these lovely days out in the fresh air. Also there is the need to educate and make aware the potential dangers we can encounter on a daily basis.