



P.O. Box 129
Rensselaer, IN 47978
219-866-4601
Toll Free 888-866-7362
Fax 219-866-2199
www.jasperremc.com

ELECTRICAL SAFETY FACT SHEET

STAY SAFE AROUND DOWNED POWER LINES

Winter weather and car accidents are a main cause of downed power lines. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) warns consumers to use extreme caution should they encounter a downed power line.

"Downed power lines can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or possibly death. Assume that any downed line you see is an energized power line, and report it immediately to the police, fire department and your local electric utility," said an ESFI representative.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe around downed power lines:

- If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.
- The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the chance for a human path of electric current and minimize the hazards of electric shock. Electricity can move from a high voltage zone to a low voltage zone-and it could do that through your body.
- If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed power line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick. Even non-conductive materials like wood, if slightly wet, can conduct electricity and then electrocute you.
- Be careful not to put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.
- If you are in your car and it is in contact with the downed power line, stay in your car. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle.
- If you must leave your car because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together to avoid contact with the live car and the ground at the same time. This way you reduce the risk of becoming part of the path of electricity from the car to the earth. Shuffling away from the car is also important.
- Do not drive over downed power lines.