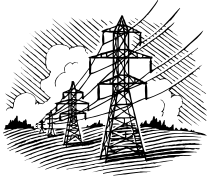




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EXCAVATING NEAR A POWER LINE



Q: When excavating near a power line with a rating of 50 kV. what steps should you take to insure safety to all in the area?

A:

- For lines rated 50 kV. or below, minimum clearance between the lines and any part of the equipment or load shall be 10 feet;
- For lines rated over 50 kV., minimum clearance between the lines and any part of the equipment or load shall be 10 feet plus 0.4 inch for each 1 kV. over 50 kV., or twice the length of the line insulator, but never less than 10 feet;
- In transit with no load and boom lowered, the equipment clearance shall be a minimum of 4 feet for voltages less than 50 kV., and 10 feet for voltages over 50 kV., up to and including 345 kV., and 16 feet for voltages up to and including 750 kV.
- A person shall be designated to observe clearance of the equipment and give timely warning for all operations where it is difficult for the operator to maintain the desired clearance by visual means;
- Cage-type boom guards, insulating links, or proximity warning devices may be used on cranes, but the use of such devices shall not alter the requirements of any other regulation of this part even if such device is required by law or regulation;
- Any overhead wire shall be considered to be an energized line unless and until the person owning such line or the electrical utility authorities indicate that it is not an energized line and it has been visibly grounded;
- Prior to work near transmitter towers where an electrical charge can be induced in the equipment or materials being handled, the transmitter shall be de-energized or tests shall be made to determine if electrical charge is induced on the crane. The following precautions shall be taken when necessary to dissipate induced voltages:
 - The equipment shall be provided with an electrical ground directly to the upper rotating structure supporting the boom;
 - Ground jumper cables shall be attached to materials being handled by boom equipment when electrical charge is induced while working near energized transmitters. Crews shall be provided with nonconductive poles having large alligator clips or other similar protection to attach the ground cable to the load; and
- Combustible and flammable materials shall be removed from the immediate area prior to operations.

Handbook of OSHA Construction Safety and Health (213-214)

Reference: Vermont Local Roads, September 2008