

SAFETY HEROES

MYTHBUSTERS



Myth: You can tell if a fallen powerline is 'live' because it will spark.

Busted: Fallen powerlines do not spark or move wildly around. Powerlines are hard to see when they're lying on the ground as they don't move. They can be easily hidden in branches, debris or water.

TIP: If you find something you think might be a powerline, always assume it's 'live' and dangerous. Don't take chances. Keep well away, warn others and call Triple Zero (000).



Myth: If I only touch one powerline at a time, I will be safe... like a bird on a wire.

Busted: Birds have no problem sitting, unruffled, on the powerlines you see around your neighbourhood. This has nothing to do with them being birds but it's all about the connections they're making or importantly, not making.

Put simply, when a bird sits on a single wire, its two feet are at the same electrical potential, meaning that the electrons in the wires have no motivation to travel through the bird's body. No moving electrons means no electric current, so no shock. Our bird is safe, for the moment anyway... If that bird stretches out a wing or a leg and touches a second wire, especially one with a different electrical potential, it will open a path for the electrons—right through the bird's body. And ZAP it will get a shock.

TIP: Always keep away from overhead powerlines. Never play on electrical equipment or in trees near powerlines.

Other interesting safety facts:



Fact: Water and electricity don't mix.

Water is an excellent conductor of electricity and can provide a path for a current to flow from the switch to your hand. An electric shock can be more serious if you have bare feet and wet skin so be careful in bathrooms and laundries.

TIP: Never touch a switch or electrical appliance with wet hands and keep electrical appliances away from water.



Fact: Safety switches save lives.

A safety switch monitors current flow in your home and helps to protect against the most frequent cause of electrocution – shock caused by electricity passing through the body to earth.

If a fault occurs in an appliance or wiring, causing current to flow to earth – perhaps through a person – the safety switch will sense the fault and turn off power in less than 30th of a second or a heartbeat, potentially preventing electrocution.

TIP: Ensure your safety switch is working correctly by remembering to test your safety switch every 3 months.

For extra electricity tips and to learn more about being a Safety Hero, visit:

ergon.com.au/safetyheroes | energex.com.au/safetyheroes



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