

# Private power poles and powerlines

As of 1 July 2018 new laws are in place regarding the responsibility for private power poles and powerlines on rural leased land in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The changes were made by amending the Utilities (Technical Regulation) 2014.

The changes have been introduced in order to reduce bushfire ignitions from powerlines in rural areas caused by deteriorating power poles, dropped powerlines and encroaching vegetation, which all pose a risk of starting a bushfire, especially during the declared bushfire season.

Your property has been identified as having private powerlines and power poles.

Here's what you need to know.

## Private powerlines and power poles are your responsibility

Evoenergy does not own and maintain all electricity infrastructures in the ACT. For example, there are around 1,000 power poles with associated powerlines that are privately owned on rural leased land.

Evoenergy owns the electrical infrastructure up to the metering point or the secondary side of the supply fuse, this is defined as the network boundary. The land-holder (lessee or property occupier) is responsible for all the assets behind the network boundary, including private power poles and powerlines.

From 1 July 2018 Evoenergy, the ACT electricity distributor is responsible for inspecting the condition of private power poles and powerlines on rural leased land at least every three years, to ensure they are adequately maintained. This obligation does not extend to private power poles on urban leased land.

These provisions also apply to the

inspection of vegetation infringing the minimum clearance distance from private power poles and powerlines.

If after inspection Evoenergy determines that the private power poles or powerlines are not being maintained adequately, or are in an unsafe state, Evoenergy may give written notice to the land-holder to take whatever action is necessary to repair and restore the electrical infrastructure to a safe state. The time period for repair will not be less than 14 days.

If you do not comply with the notice in the designated time period then Evoenergy may do whatever is necessary to repair and restore the electrical infrastructure to a safe state. This may include de-energisation or disconnection. Evoenergy will then charge you the reasonable costs it has incurred.

Evoenergy has the right in urgent circumstances to do whatever is necessary to repair and restore the electrical infrastructure to a safe state without giving notice to the land-holder.

## How can I tell if a pole or line is private?

A private power pole will generally have a yellow Private Pole tag attached and/or be marked with a number starting with "P". Each power pole will also have an identifying number that should not be removed.

However, a power pole may be a private pole even if it is not marked. If you need assistance identifying private electricity assets please seek advice from a qualified electrical contractor or contact Evoenergy.

## How much does it cost to maintain private power poles?

Replacing defective power poles can

be expensive. Evoenergy recommends that you arrange for private power poles on your property to be maintained to prolong the need for substantive work. If your power poles require maintenance work there are a number of providers but please ensure that they are qualified. As a starting point look at the listings of electrical contractors online or in the Yellow Pages.

You may also wish to check the extent to which your insurances cover power pole replacement or loss or damage caused by defective private power poles.

### Helpful information

Listed below are some general actions you can take in relation to safety and maintenance of private powerlines and power poles.

### Safety checklist

- Reduce the potential for fire damage to power poles by keeping vegetation and clutter clear of the base of poles.
- Maintain trees on your property to ensure they remain at least the minimum distance away from powerlines to reduce the risk of electrocution or bushfires.
- Check for obvious powerline defects, such as broken cross-arms, strands of wire, loose or damaged insulators, broken or damaged pole stay-wires and arrange repairs immediately with an electrical contractor.

### Maintenance tips

- You can contribute to the life of the power pole and assist in the inspection process by carrying out regular weed and bush removal around its base.
- Regular whipper-snipping around the base of a steel pole can remove the galvanising, so be careful as this may significantly reduce its life.

- Do not whipper-snip around underground cables terminated on the power pole.
- If you notice defects, such as power poles on a significant lean, nuts and bolts missing, steelwork hanging loosely, conductors too close to the ground and broken insulators or wires, arrange for repairs to be carried out as soon as possible by an appropriate electrical contractor for the required works.
- Avoid building up the ground around any pole base, for example, garden features, as this hinders pole inspection and increases below ground timber rot.

### Further information and contacts

- Evoenergy website [evoenergy.com.au](http://evoenergy.com.au) or phone 13 23 86 for information about inspection of power poles, power lines and vegetation management, or for assistance identifying the private power poles on a rural property.
- Utilities Technical Regulation team within Access Canberra on 6207 1814 for information about the legislative changes.

### Language assistance

如果您需要幫助，請打電話給下面的號碼。

¿Necesita un intérprete? Llame al número indicado abajo.

هل تحتاج إلى مترجم؟ اتصل بالرقم أدناه.

Trebate li pomoć tumača? Nazovite niže navedeni broj.

Nếu quý vị cần sự giúp đỡ, vui lòng gọi số bên dưới.

**13 14 50** for language assistance **24 hours**