

## REMINDER: LOOK UP BEFORE YOU BUILD

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING OVERHEAD POWER LINES IN NOVA SCOTIA

As construction work continues in communities across our province, we want to support you the best we can. To ensure safety at all sites and to avoid unnecessary delays and costly fixes, we wanted to share some friendly reminders about things to consider early in your project design.

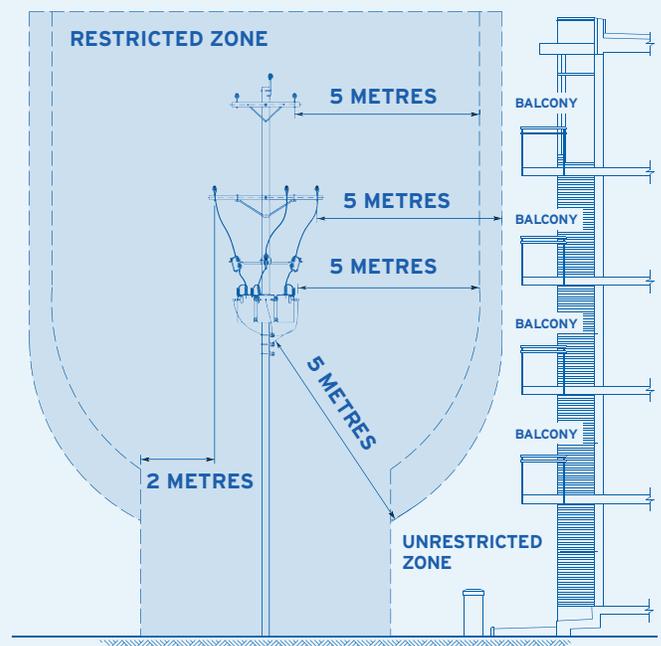
With any project, no matter the size, it is important to do your homework. Part of that is looking up before you build. Minimum clearance requirements between high voltage power lines and a property are put in place for your protection and safety. Adhering to these requirements is the Builder/Developer's responsibility.

On occasion, buildings are constructed too close to the overhead lines, creating construction and maintenance challenges. The most common category we deal with involves the construction or renovation of apartment buildings, condos and commercial space. For these developments it is important to remember the following:

### MINIMUM CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR POWER DISTRIBUTION LINES:

- Having energized power lines cross over any building part should be avoided. If this is not possible an absolute minimum of 3 metres vertical clearance must be maintained. The area within 2 metres horizontally from the outermost conductors (in a resting position) on any line is considered to be 'under the line'.
- We recommend a clearance of 5 metres in any direction from power lines. This allows buildings and power lines to exist with minimal interaction/interference.
  - » Clearances for construction can usually be accommodated with minimum involvement from Nova Scotia Power.
  - » Future maintenance of the structure (depending on what is being done) can usually be accommodated with minimum involvement from Nova Scotia Power.
- Maintaining these distances will keep workers on the site safe during construction and allow for the future enjoyment of tenants.
- Structures must be an absolute minimum of 3.5 metres (horizontally) from the closest overhead primary voltage power line.
- No structure can be built above any power lines.

- No permanent building or structure shall be placed within **5 metres** measured radially from any primary voltage conductor or equipment measured from the closest primary conductor (at rest) to the closest point of the building or structure.
- A minimum horizontal separation of **1.5 metres** from the building or structure to secondary conductor (<750v) shall be maintained, unless secondary conductors connect supply to the building's electrical system.
- No permanent building or structure shall be placed under a power line. The area within **2 metres** horizontally from the outermost conductors (in a resting position) on any line is considered to be 'under the line'.
- Zero voltage support wires (ie. span guys) may cross over the customer's structure and shall maintain at least **2 metres** vertical clearance to the closest part over the building or structure.
- Contact Nova Scotia Power distribution standards engineer to determine specific clearances applicable to your project.



## BEFORE GETTING STARTED:

Safety is key. When estimating the distance between a line and a proposed development have a professional surveyor determine the distance.

Provide Nova Scotia Power with site drawings showing the location of the building with respect to power lines, at the earliest stage of planning.

## IMPORTANCE OF MEETING CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- **Avoid Delays** - Construction can be halted by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education if the site is not considered safe; the footprint of the development or the features of the building may need to be modified.
- **Responsibility** - If the building is non-compliant and someone is injured, you can be held responsible.
- **Avoid Costly Mistakes** - If the building does not provide safe clearance for maintainers or occupants, the power lines may have to be moved at the Builder or Developer's expense.

More detailed information on relevant regulations and obligations can be found at:

### 1. SECTION 2.3.1.1 OF THE NS BUILDING CODE

Construction Safety Regulations states: "Every constructor shall ensure that all construction safety requirements of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, Occupational Health and Safety Division, are complied with."

For more information, visit: <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/bcregs.htm>

### 2. PART 11, SECTION 126 OF THE NS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY - "ELECTRICAL SAFETY"

*"No person shall carry out work that may bring a person or object closer than 6 metres to an overhead energized power line or power line equipment where the voltage of the overhead energized power line is not known to the person carrying out the work."*

For more information, visit: [https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsgensf.htm#TOC1\\_11](https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsgensf.htm#TOC1_11)

For any additional questions, email us at [businessolutions@nspower.ca](mailto:businessolutions@nspower.ca) or call a member of our Builder Support Team at 1-866-527-5500.