

CHAPTER 49-21.1 ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES

49-21.1-01. Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

1. "High voltage" means a voltage in excess of six hundred volts between conductors or between any single conductor and the ground.
2. "Overhead lines or overhead conductors" means electrical conductors installed above the ground, except conductors de-energized and grounded or enclosed in protective conduit or other metal covering.

49-21.1-01.1. Electricity transmission and distribution lines - Differentiation.

Except for purposes of transmission facility siting under chapter 49-22 and regulatory accounting including the determination of the demarcation between federal and state jurisdiction over transmission in interstate commerce and local distribution, for purposes of this title and chapter 57-33.2, lines designed to operate at a voltage of 41.6 kilovolts or more are transmission lines, and lines designed to operate at a voltage less than 41.6 kilovolts are distribution lines.

49-21.1-02. Operations within ten feet prohibited.

No person shall store or erect any tools, machinery, equipment, supplies, materials, apparatus, house, or other building, or any part thereof, within ten feet [3.05 meters] of any high voltage overhead conductor.

49-21.1-03. Warning sign required on equipment.

No person shall operate any crane, derrick, power shovel, drilling rig, hoisting equipment, or similar apparatus, any part of which is capable of lateral or swinging motion, unless there is posted and maintained in plain view of the operator thereof, a durable warning sign legible at twelve feet [3.66 meters] which reads: "Unlawful to operate this equipment within ten feet [3.05 meters] of high voltage lines". Each day's failure to post or maintain such signs shall constitute a separate violation.

49-21.1-03.1. Work near high voltage overhead lines - Safety requirements - Notice - Costs.

If any work is performed within six feet [1.83 meters] of any high voltage overhead line, or if mechanical equipment or machinery used near high voltage overhead lines is capable of motion to within ten feet [3.05 meters] of any high voltage overhead line, the person responsible for the work shall notify the operator of the high voltage overhead line of the intent to work near the line. The work may be pursued only after the person and the operator of the line have provided protection for endangered persons by mechanical or insulated barriers, by de-energizing and grounding the line, or by temporary relocation of the line. The person working near the overhead line must pay the operator actual expenses necessary to meet the requirements of this chapter, except that the operator of the line is responsible for the cost if the line was installed closer to an existing fixture or structure than the minimum clearance required by the latest edition of the national electrical safety code, as adopted by the public service commission. The operator of the line need not take the precautions until the person working near the line pays the necessary expenses. Within five business days after payment of those expenses, or as otherwise agreed upon in writing by the person responsible for the work, the operator of the line shall complete the arrangements for protection of endangered persons.

49-21.1-04. Penalty.

Any person who violates this chapter is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars. The civil penalty may be recovered by action prosecuted by the state's attorney of the county where the violation occurred.

49-21.1-05. Exceptions.

This chapter does not apply to:

1. Construction, reconstruction, operation, or maintenance of any high voltage overhead conductor, supporting structure, or appurtenances for the support or operation of a high voltage conductor by persons authorized by the owner or operator.
2. Work on telecommunications, coaxial, signaling, and other communication circuits or their supporting structures, or other circuits and their supporting structures which are not high voltage.
3. The operation or maintenance of railroad equipment or vehicles on fixed rails or railroad right of way.
4. Work by any employee of an industrial plant on the electrical system of the plant.
5. Work by any employee of an electrical or communications contractor performed under the employer's supervision.
6. The operation of highway vehicles, agricultural equipment, or agricultural aircraft which in normal use may incidentally pass within the ten-foot [3.05-meter] clearance limitation.
7. Governmental entities responding to an emergency situation.
8. Work by any employee of a surface coal mining company in the course of coal mining activities.
9. The state and its agencies.