

Media Release



24 February 2013

Electrical safety in floods an essential priority

As torrential rain and gale force winds batter the State's North Coast, Essential Energy is reminding residents and emergency workers to remain vigilant with electrical safety.

Essential Energy's acting regional general manager North Coast, Daniel Bylsma, urged the public to follow some basic electrical safety tips – whether preparing for flood waters, when a property is in flood or after the water has receded.

"We need people to be aware of possible electrical dangers and know what safety precautions they can take during each stage to ensure their own safety and that of their families," Daniel said.

"Most importantly, no one should enter a premise that has been affected by flood waters without first ensuring the energised electrical wiring has been shut off or disconnected."

For more flood safety information customers can contact Essential Energy on 13 23 91 or visit www.essentialenergy.com.au.

Editor's note: Essential Energy's Flood Safety Tips follow on the next page.

**Media contact: Rachel Hussell, Manager Community Relations, North Coast
02 6589 8918 or 0408 278 275**

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Essential Energy's Flood Safety Tips

Preparing for a flood

- Where possible raise all electrical appliances before the flood.
- If you have some warning that you will be flooded contact Essential Energy as soon as possible on 13 20 80 to see if it is possible to have your supply disconnected before the flood waters reach your property.
- If your supply has not been disconnected, turn off all switches and main switches before the flood. To reduce the risk of electric shock, do not use any part of your body to hold the meter box lid open – use the prop or an object that is non conductive.

During a flood

- Do not stay inside a building that is inundated when the power is connected.
- Do not use any electrical appliances that have been wet or damaged.
- When operating a domestic portable generator refer to the manufacturer's operating instructions and the Essential Energy 'Domestic Portable Generator' fact sheet. Visit our website at essentialenergy.com.au/safety or call 13 23 91 for a copy of the fact sheet.
- If you are in a boat, be aware that rising flood waters reduce the clearance of overhead powerlines.
- Always stay at least eight metres away from fallen powerlines and any objects in contact with them.
- Always assume powerlines are live and dangerous
- If you receive a shock or tingling sensation from any electrical appliances, plumbing, metal, sink or bath:
 - avoid all contact with the appliance or objects in question
 - call Essential Energy's 24 hour supply interruptions line on 13 20 80 and report the problem as soon as you can.

After the flood

- Have the electrical installation inspected by a qualified electrician and repairs carried out before contacting Essential Energy to have power restored.
- Do not plug in or use any appliances that have been in flood water until they have been checked by a qualified electrician.
- Call Essential Energy on 13 20 80 before turning the power on if the building has been inundated by flood waters.

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Essential Energy manages Australia's largest electricity network spanning 95 per cent of New South Wales' land mass. Owned by the New South Wales Government, Essential Energy employs around 4,600 people and also provides water and sewerage services to customers in far western New South Wales.