

# PF Olsen Toolbox Safety Alert 52

<b>Date:</b> December 2022	<b>Focus Group:</b> Harvesting Operations
<b>Topic:</b> Working Near Live Power Lines	<b>Issued by:</b> Craig Fisher

**Background and Incident:** Two machines were being used to fell trees within the *fall hazard zone* of a live power line. One cut the trees while the other would stabilise and push. While waiting for the other machine to arrive, the operator of the felling machine decided to make the front cuts (the scarf). The tree, which was 15m from the live lines, snapped and fell across the lines, breaking two power poles.

**Injury Details:** No injury to persons or damage to the machines. The two poles were replaced (the lines remained intact). WorkSafe was advised of this notifiable incident.

**Risk Awareness:** Trees falling onto live power lines can create a pathway for electricity (through the tree, the machine and/or the ground). Anyone in contact with this pathway is at serious risk of being electrocuted or receiving a significant shock and burns. Power line strikes are also a serious fire risk in dry weather conditions.

**Safe Behaviours:** Controls and procedures are required as follows:

- The [Safe Op – Working Near Live Power Lines](#) – Please read before starting work
- WorkSafe’s [guidance](#) – has a focus on how the PCBUs must work together (3Cs)

**Important Points:**

- All PCBUs must cooperate and complete the [Electrical Hazard Management Plan](#)
- When lines are live, work requires a *Competent Person* ([TCP2](#)) on site at all times
- Reclosers – systems that re-liven lines under fault conditions – should be disabled

**For Site Manager:**

Print and complete the following:

1. Discuss with employees/operators:
2. Place on site notice board or in file:

**Site Manager:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** / /  
(initials)

