

Easement co-use on underground transmission cables



Building for the future



Key Points

- Your safety and the security of electricity supply is essential – for your protection there are some activities that are not permitted near underground high voltage transmission cables.
- It's important that landowners are aware of the activities that are prohibited, as well as those that are conditional and allowed near underground electricity cables.
- High voltage electricity cables are installed within an easement. Easements are a legal 'right of way' over a portion of land which allows Powerlink to construct, operate and maintain transmission lines or underground cables.
- Easements are required to allow Powerlink to legally access our high voltage electricity cables and, for safety reasons, restrict certain activities on or near the easement area.
- In general, many everyday activities can continue as normal on easements, as long as they don't pose a risk to your safety, encroach on electrical safety clearances or inhibit safe operation and maintenance of our transmission lines and underground cables.
- If you wish to conduct some activities, such as operating machinery near underground cables, or are not sure about what you are or are not permitted to do, you must first contact Powerlink. We will undertake a detailed safety assessment **beforehand** and provide you with written consent or otherwise.
- If you are unsure about the location of underground electricity cables, for your own safety, always check first. To obtain plans of underground transmission cables and other underground installations, please call **Dial Before You Dig on 1100**, or visit **www.1100.com.au** before conducting any excavation.

Our transmission lines – a part of Queensland

As Queensland grows, so too does the demand for electricity. The development of more homes and industries, and the increased use of air conditioning all contribute to increased electricity demand.

To ensure we can continue to maintain a reliable supply of electricity, we construct, operate and maintain our transmission lines, mainly overhead, on more than 18,000 easements across Queensland. For the security of electricity supply it's important that we have unhindered access to our transmission lines and underground cables at all times. Easements provide us with a legal right to access and carry out work, and to restrict certain activities on the easement area. The landowner continues to retain the rights and responsibilities of ownership of the land.

To help ensure your safety and the security of electricity supply, there are some activities that we cannot allow on, or near, easements.

This information sheet provides you with a general overview of co-use on easements with underground cables. However, it is only intended as a guide – please contact our Network Property department if you need advice about co-using our easements.



Safety is essential

To help ensure your safety and the security of electricity supply there are some activities that we cannot allow on, or near, easements with underground cables, and other activities that must be carefully controlled.

Activities that are permitted

- Domestic recreation, such as walking, bike riding and driving light vehicles.
- General yard work (mowing, weeding, etc).
- Planting vegetation (with small and non invasive root systems) such as:

Blue flax lily	<i>Dianella caerulea</i>
Kangaroo grass	<i>Themeda triandra</i>
Sarsaparilla vine	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>
Native ginger	<i>Alpinia caerulea</i>
Common maidenhair	<i>Adiantum aethiopicum</i>
Matrush	<i>Lomandra multiflora</i>
Myrtle wattle	<i>Acacia myrtifolia</i>
Wombat berry	<i>Eustrephus latifolius</i>
Barbed wire grass	<i>Cymbopogon refractus</i>
Broad-leaved banksia	<i>Banksia robur</i>
- Irrigation or sprinkling.
- Agricultural activities involving shallow ploughing only (up to 150mm).

Conditional activities*

- Excavation up to 150mm (e.g. filling or removing soil, sand, gravel etc).
- Erecting fences.
- Burning-off or lighting fires.
- Planting of root vegetation (e.g. potatoes or carrots).
- Installation of bike paths or planting flower beds.

* Subject to detailed Powerlink investigation and written consent – some activities may be carried out provided that conditions are met. A Powerlink representative may also be required to be present on site during such activities.

Prohibited activities

- Installing any part of a swimming pool within the easement.
- Building structures (e.g. houses and sheds) within the easement and within 2m of the easement edge.
- Storing material (e.g. garbage, soil, equipment and vehicles).
- Planting of vegetation with largest above ground stem/trunk diameter of 0.15m (15cm) within 2m of the easement.
- Interfering with or damaging cable markers used to indicate the location of the underground cables.

Check before you act

The activities outlined in this information sheet are examples only, and are not an exhaustive list.

If you intend to carry out any work on easements with underground cables that is likely to require our written consent, you must submit an application form. This form is available in Annexure C of the *Management of Easement Co-use Request Guidelines*, which can be found on Powerlink's website. Please contact us for detailed information on how to submit a form.

If you have already built a structure on the easement without our permission, please contact us on FREECALL 1800 635 369 (business hours) so we can assess any potential safety risks.

Explanations and frequently used terms

Dial Before You Dig

Dial Before You Dig is a free national community service designed to prevent damage and disruption to the vast pipe and cable networks that provide Australia with the essential services we use everyday – electricity, gas, communications and water. For more information please contact **Dial Before You Dig** on 1100, or visit their website www.1100.com.au.

Easement

An easement is a legal 'right of way' over a portion of land which allows Powerlink to construct and maintain our transmission lines and underground cables. The landowner continues to own the land over which the easement is acquired, and retains most of the rights and responsibilities of ownership. To help ensure community safety and the security of electricity supply, there are some restrictions on the landowner's use of the land within the easement. However, the restriction of rights to the resumed land is converted into a right to compensation. Information on the acquisition of easements, compensation and restriction of rights can be found on the Powerlink website or by calling 1800 635 369 (business hours).

Transmission line

A transmission line is a powerline which is capable of carrying large amounts of electricity at high voltages. Transmission lines are normally built on steel towers or concrete and steel poles, but they can be installed underground in the form of the insulated cables. The insulated cables can have copper or aluminum conductors covered by layers of insulation. They are typically installed at least 0.6m deep, but still require a large safety clearance for a number of above ground activities, including excavation.



About Us

Powerlink Queensland is a State Government-owned corporation which owns, develops, operates and maintains the high voltage transmission network in Queensland.

Our network of high voltage substations and transmission lines extends 1,700km from Cairns to the New South Wales border – approximately half of Australia's eastern seaboard.

Powerlink's transmission network is the central link in the electricity supply chain, transporting electricity from power stations where it is generated, to distributors Ergon Energy, ENERGEX and Essential Energy that deliver electricity to around two million customers.

Powerlink also transports electricity directly to industrial customers and to New South Wales via the Queensland/New South Wales Interconnector transmission line.

Powerlink does not generate or buy or sell electricity – we simply transport it 'in bulk' from wherever it is generated across our high voltage transmission network to where it is needed. For more information see our *About Powerlink Queensland* brochure.

Important note: The contents of this information sheet are current at the time of print and are indicative only. Powerlink reserves the right to change its policies and procedures from time to time. Before relying on this information you should contact Powerlink to check whether it is still current.



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More Information

If you intend to work or farm near transmission lines or underground cables, it is recommended that you review:

- *Code of Practice for Working Near Exposed Live Parts* at www.eso.qld.gov.au

Other useful guides can be accessed from www.powerlink.com.au including:

- *Easement co-use*
- *Maintaining our network and easements*
- *Fire and high voltage transmission line safety*

Contact Us

If you want to know more, please:

- In case of **emergency, fallen transmission lines**, or to **report damage or vandalism**, phone FREECALL 1800 353 031. This number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- More general enquires can be directed to: website.enquiries@powerlink.com.au
- Visit www.powerlink.com.au, or write to:

Network Property
Powerlink Queensland
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