

Rebate on overhead powerline markers offered to farmers in bid to improve safety

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SafeWork NSW will offer a \$500 rebate towards the cost of the powerline markers, while Essential Energy is providing free installation. Photo: Essential Energy

The NSW government and energy providers have announced support for farmers to install overhead powerline markers on their property in a bid to improve safety.

SafeWork NSW will offer landholders a \$500 small business rebate towards the cost of the markers if they complete an eligible SafeWork event or visit.

While Essential Energy, whose energy footprint covers 95 per cent of NSW, has committed to offering free labour to install a maximum 10 markers on each customer's property, allowing them to save up to \$1000 each.

Essential Energy's head of operations, Sarah Roche said they had seen a variety of incidents across their network, including tipper trucks and aerial spraying planes coming into contact with powerlines.

"We know that these aerial markers work, we have never had a safety incident on a powerline where we have installed these markers," she said.

It is the second on-farm safety initiative Essential Energy has launched in the last 12-months.

After reporting a concerning number of electricity asset strikes, the company introduced the 'Look Up and Live' app ahead of schedule last September. The app shows the location of powerlines on an interactive map.

Aerial Application Association of Australia chief executive officer, Phil Hurst has been pushing for an increase in overhead powerline markers and said the latest news would represent a great leap forward in safety.

"It's now easy for landholders to do a risk assessment, identify where these markers could make a real difference and then get something up in a short time-frame for a very reasonable cost," he said.

Mr Hurst said research they had conducted had found powerlines were hit even in situations where pilots or vehicle operators knew they were there.

"That's to do with the fact that powerlines are very hard to see so there's no reminder in the short-term memory."

Mr Hurst said the aerial markers, produced by Australian-company, Balmoral Engineering, solved this problem.

"You have to be able to see markers within 400 metres for them to be compliant but because these markers spin, in the slightest breeze, you can see the Balmoral marker from about a kilometre away," he said.

Visit the [SafeWork NSW](#) and [Essential Energy](#) websites for more information.

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