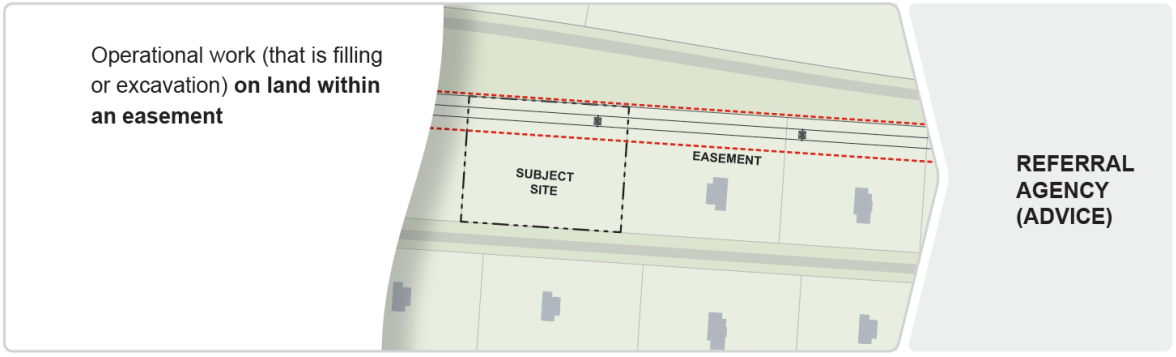
Operational Works in an Easement - Overhead

4 February 2019

Part of the Energy Queensland Group

Under the *Planning Regulation 2017*, if a development application involves operational works that are '*filling or excavation where the works are located completely or partly in the easement'* this will trigger a referral to us as a Referral Agency.



Operational works (excavation and filling)

Significant safety risks exist when working near electrical infrastructure. Operational works in and around electrical easements can affect the controlled environment which easements provide.

Transmission and distribution powerlines in our easements feed the network with electricity, so they are essential to maintaining supply to our customers. The above referral trigger helps us protect our electrical infrastructure in an easement from development and ensure community safety and a reliable power supply.

Given the importance of transmission and distribution powerlines, we consider operational works in or near our easements to be high risk. There is always a need to assess whether the works will impact on the safe operation of the powerlines, or on community safety.

Allowing us to assess operational works within easements ensures appropriate construction practices are followed near any electrical infrastructure.

Proposed earthworks within electricity network easements should be designed to maintain access along the easement. Otherwise, the works can block access to our powerlines and other electricity infrastructure for maintenance and emergency situations.

Stockpiling soil on easements can also result in breaches to statutory clearance requirements, and is prohibited unless approved by us.

Operational works (excavation and filling) on transmission or distribution overhead easements

Excavation and/or filling works can negatively impact powerlines. There are a number of things to consider when undertaking works within or along transmission or distribution easements that contain overhead electrical assets:

1. **Filling under overhead powerlines**

   Overhead powerlines are designed and built to strict standards to provide adequate ground clearances. These safety clearances also allow for extreme weather conditions (particularly temperature changes) to ensure the lines do not come into contact with structures. Changing natural ground levels underneath a powerline can cause safety and/or statutory clearance breaches.

2. **Access to infrastructure**

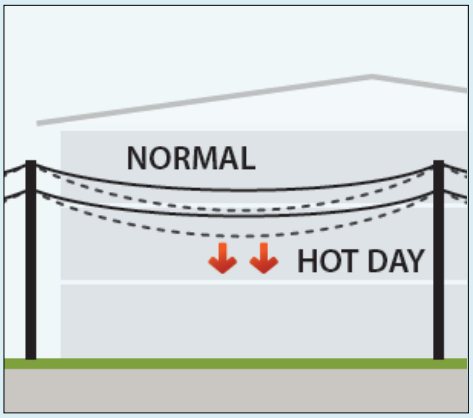
   Access to and along easements must be available to our personnel at all times for maintenance and emergency purposes. Excessive filling and/or excavation works immediately adjacent, along or within an easement can limit access to our construction and maintenance crews and their vehicles/equipment.

3. **Structural integrity of infrastructure**

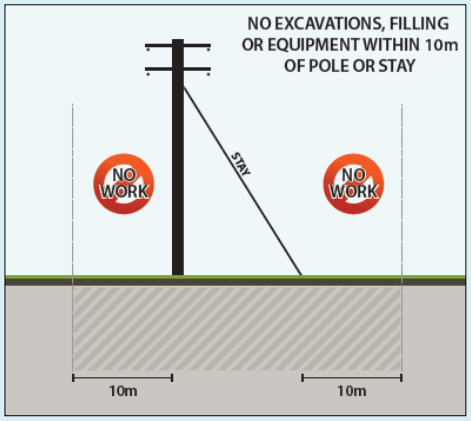
   Excavation works around electricity towers, poles or stays can adversely alter the structural integrity of our electrical infrastructure.

4. **Drainage**

   Excavation or filling works can alter the flow and drainage of stormwater within an easement. This potentially restricts access to and through an easement and its infrastructure.



Powerline sag is a reaction to climate temperatures and operating conditions. Filling under a line can impact on statutory clearances to the ground if final clearance levels do not allow for any 'sag'.



'No civil works zones' of 10 metres are established around our transmission and distribution structures to ensure the structural integrity of the asset is maintained. Works are allowed within these zones if appropriate measures are taken to support the structure during and after the completion of works. These measures must be verified with an assessment by us.

Contact us

For more information, visit our website or contact us at:

- www.ergon.com.au/referralagency
- 13 74 66 (7am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday)
- townplanning@ergon.com.au

And, for more information about working safely near powerlines, please see our **working safely near powerlines information.**